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EDITORIAL

WE hope that the articles of this number will succeed in showing what a wide-ranging idea conversion is. In its most obvious meaning it is the act or process by which someone turns to God. This at least is the appearance. But the reality in the Christian view is that God turns people to him. Conversion is a being turned rather than a turning. It is true that God uses our co-operation in converting both ourselves and other people; but always it is he that is the prime converter. Then again we normally think of conversion as an event that happens, and is then over and done with. But when we look closer the fact is seen to be rather different; the convert goes on being converted for the rest of his life. Conversion is a life-long being turned to God. Finally we usually talk as if converts were only a particular group in the Church, those who were not born to the faith, but came to it later in life. But in fact all Christians are converts. 'Except you be converted and become like little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.' Nobody is saved, no one gets to heaven, unless God has converted him, unless the Father has drawn him to Christ.

Our first article may seem rather remote from the theme of conversion. It is a talk given by the Pope, when he was still Cardinal Patriarch of Venice, on the duties of the bishop, and we print it as an expression of filial veneration and affection for the Holy Father. Cardinal Roncalli was speaking of the bishop as father and shepherd, and perhaps we can fit his talk into our conversion theme by saying that it is the office of the shepherd to recover the lost sheep, that is to convert them and keep them converted.

This article is followed by a sermon on St Dominic, which is not only proper to the month of August, but may perhaps serve to link the discourse of Cardinal Roncalli with the other articles in this number. For St Dominic explicitly thought of himself and the order he founded as providing the bishops with mobile forces to assist them in their office of preaching; preaching the gospel to feed the sheep of Christ, to save souls, to convert men to God.

FATHER AND SHEPHERD

A talk given to the clergy of Venice at a Diocesan Synod, November, 1957, by the patriarch, Cardinal Roncalli, our present Pope.¹

MY dear brothers in the priesthood of Christ:
For a long time now I have wanted to have a heart-to-heart talk with you. Up to now I have been following all that you do and I am very pleased and bless the Lord for all the good that is in you. In public, as you know, I am happy to bear witness to your excellent spirit and to the work which you accomplish. It is with joy that I give even more abundant testimony of this in the presence of the Holy Father, Vicar of Christ on earth and head of the whole Catholic family. I did so last year on the occasion of my first *ad limina* visit. I received in return words of encouragement and comfort for us all. That audience of June 8th, 1956, has left a deep impression of good-will on the part of the Holy Father and, on our side, of filial devotion to his august person. On that occasion we offered to the Holy Father a mosaic of our first patriarch, St Laurence Justinian. This image will always be there to remind them of us at the Vatican.

It is to the intercession of St Laurence Justinian, with whom I feel myself united in spirit by prayer, that I attribute the consolations of this synod. I hope that it will complete worthily the pastoral work, modest, like my strength, but coming from the heart, that the Lord has allowed me to accomplish during the five years that I have been bishop in this dear land of St Mark.

During the three exhortations which the *Liber Pontificalis* allows and encourages me to deliver for our common good I propose to speak briefly and as though conversing with you. I hope in this to be guided by St Laurence Justinian and by another, nearer in time and therefore more alive to us, St Pius X.

I am going to talk to you about the office of patriarch, about his duties towards those who work with him and about what they in turn should render him.

I will keep for tomorrow some thoughts on that priestly dignity which is yours. I shall consider it in relation to the Lord, to you yourselves, and to the Church.

¹ This translation is made from the French text of *Documentation Catholique*, December 21 1958, by kind permission of the editor.

On the third day we shall examine together our duties to our people and find out what they expect of us.

There will, then, be three themes, the patriarch, his clergy, and the Christian people.

The Spiritual Fatherhood of the Bishop

The Roman pontifical, my guide in matters liturgical and pastoral, speaks thus of the patriarch in the *Ordo ad Synodum* which I have open before me. 'Most dear brothers and priests of the Lord. You are the helpers of our order. However unworthy we may be, we occupy the place of Aaron while you hold that of Eleazar and Ithamar. We stand in the place of the twelve apostles, while you take that of the seventy-two disciples. We are pastors set over you all, while you have charge of those souls whom we have confided to you. We have to give an account of you to the Lord Jesus, supreme shepherd, but you are only answerable to him for the people entrusted to you.'

It is customary in the liturgy to add to the bishop's name the title 'father and lord'. But in the language of the gospel, in that of Christian tradition dating from the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, in the everyday speech of Christian folk throughout the centuries, and in modern pastoral practice, the duties of a bishop are expressed in two words, not 'father and lord' but 'father and shepherd'.

I will speak frankly and with all simplicity. Five years ago the Holy Father, overlooking my unworthiness, sent me to you. Withdrawing me from the direct service of the Holy See he sent me as patriarch of Venice, bishop, that is, of a specific part of Christ's flock. The task was one not unfamiliar to me. For ten years, before being sent to France in the diplomatic service, I had been employed under holy obedience at Constantinople, the modern Istanbul. Here I fulfilled the duties of apostolic delegate for all the Catholics, of whatever rite, in this immense area of the Middle East. I was at the same time apostolic administrator with ordinary powers over the Catholics of the Latin rite.

I remember having put up in the rooms where I lived the words 'father and shepherd'. Of these the more important title is that of father.

The full force of this can be understood in the light of the expression which St Paul uses to defend his rights as a father in

the spirit against the encroachments of any other teaching authority whatever. 'You may have ten thousand schoolmasters in Christ, but not more than one father: it was I that begot you in Jesus Christ, when I preached the gospel to you' (1 Cor. iv, 15).

For many the name of 'father' applied to a bishop is bound up with the memory of some act of kindness which has touched them. For others, for the truly zealous, the bishop is 'father' in the sense that he is entirely given over to the service of charity in his diocese. They have some idea of the burden of care and worry, of trials of all sorts, which the government of a diocese today involves. They know that at the head there is someone who bears in God's sight the responsibility for the eternal salvation of thousands of souls, and who has the means to bring this about.

It is the father who has to fulfil unceasingly the task of feeding his children on the spiritual food which they must have lest they fall on the hard road which is life in this world. He it is who must protect them against the dangers which menace faith, unity, and life itself. It is the father who after having, in the words of St Paul, given birth to his children, begets them a second time by assuring their Christian upbringing so that they may be freely guided in their family and social life by Christian principles.

There is a concept of the spiritual fatherhood of the bishop which is loftier still. Properly understood it is an expression of true fatherly authority. It is not imposed from outside by some external force. It is not a mere juridical power of domination. It is a service of love, of daily devotion and abnegation, of brotherly love in helping one another which animates the family of the children of God.

The code of canon law itself reminds bishops that they are pastors of souls and that they should govern their flocks not in order to exercise dominion over them, but so as to love them as sons and brothers.

Beyond all this there is a yet higher plane where the teaching of the Church on the origins of the spiritual fatherhood of the bishop reaches its culminating point.

Here we touch upon a mystery. It is revealed that the Heavenly Father, infinitely good and merciful, always just and transcendent in his majesty, has nevertheless out of love taken the initiative in the great work of our redemption.

'God so loved the world that he gave up his only begotten

Son' (John iii, 16). The word 'give' refers to three manifestations of the divine goodness.

1. The mediation of the Word of God made flesh on behalf of man.

2. The setting up of the Church as the family of the children of God.

3. The formation, within the Church, of a hierarchy *ubi humana divinis junguntur* as a visible sign of God's fatherhood.

Many people, when they speak of spiritual fatherhood, think somewhat as follows: Up above there is our Father in heaven, far removed from men but overshadowing them with his paternal providence. Down below human beings struggle with the difficulties of life.

But that is not exactly what Christianity teaches. What is fundamental is that in the centre between God and man you have Jesus Christ, God made man, the unique and necessary mediator. 'No man can go to the Father save through me' (John xvi, 6).

Jesus is the way. He is the supreme gift of the Father. For the Christian what matters is to be incorporated in Christ and to be united to him. The Son of God will make each baptized person a member of his body, setting up a family relationship, that of a son, between him and his heavenly Father. This way of expressing it was so dear to St Paul that he used it 164 times in his letters.

From this the rest develops. In his Son, made man, the heavenly Father calls his creatures to life with him as in a family. The Son came down on earth to set up the organization of family life in that society which we call the Church. From this come the social and community characteristics which are essential to Catholicism.

The Church is not simply an exterior help and guide. It is in and through her that God's fatherhood is extended to us, from the Father to the Son, and from the Son, head of the body, his Church, to us, its members. The Church is then in truth the family of God (cf. Eph. iii, 19).

If she is a family, there is authority within her organized according to rank. In this hierarchy there will be a chief, there will be subordinate commanders, and there will be the general body of her members. In the unique body, the whole Christ which is the Church, all are closely linked to one another. There is the visible head, the pontiff who represents Christ, the head invisible to human eyes, who lives on as his grace flows through the

members. There are successors to the apostles, those who share in the apostolic ministry from the highest to the humblest rank, and there are all those who share the divine life.

It is in this wonderful structure, this living organism, that the paternity of the bishop finds its proper place. The patriarch and all the bishops in the different parts of the world are associated with Christ in a ministry at once sublime and awe-inspiring, but in which all who show themselves worthy will have the help of divine grace.

Our reasoning, my dear colleagues, clear and easy to follow, has led us to those heights where are to be found those ideas which go to make up the notion of a bishop as father. From this vantage point it is both easy and natural to look at the relations between the father and those, both clergy and people, who are under his authority.

It is at this point that the personal views of your patriarch on his duties and responsibilities will have their place.

The Council of Trent declares that 'the bishops, who have succeeded to the place of the apostles, belong in a more special way to the hierarchic order than do the other ranks of the clergy and are set up, as the same apostle (St Paul) says, to rule the Church of God' (Sess. XXIII, ch. 4).

The words of the martyred St Ignatius are always impressive. 'Be subject to the bishop as to the Lord. Let all obey the bishop even as the Lord Jesus Christ obeyed the Father' (*Ep. ad Smyrn*).

Stronger still are the declarations concerning the exercise of episcopal authority towards the clergy and people. I have come across some vigorous observations on the subject in a recent book by my good friend Mgr Guerry, archbishop of Cambrai, entitled *L'Evêque* (Fayard, 1956). In it he says that the bishop must avoid two extremes, which he calls authoritarianism and paternalism.

Authoritarianism stifles all life. It implies a rigid external discipline and minute harassing regulations which leave no place for legitimate initiative. It cannot listen to others and it confounds harshness with firmness and lack of suppleness with dignity.

Paternalism is counterfeit fatherliness. It keeps its subjects on leading-strings so as the better to uphold its authority. It makes a show of its liberality, yet it does not feel obliged to respect the rights of its subordinates. It speaks in a patronizing manner and it will not accept collaboration with others.

True fatherly spirit in a bishop, on the other hand, respects above all the rights of others, and is very ready to develop in his sons the true liberty of the children of God. It is filled with kindness to all but reacts vigorously against anything which may render souls slaves to passion. With energy and foresight it inveighs against every error, danger and illusion. In dealing with the faithful it shows at the same time confidence and prudence, firmness and compassion, patience and the capacity to take decisions.

What may be said of the special relations of a bishop with his priests? The foundation of a bishop's fatherly power is the apostolic mandate. This joins bishop and priests in a common destiny, sharing the same motives, and the same pastoral work. There is nothing in this world more edifying and more joyful than a diocese where the relations between bishop and clergy are open, serene, and based on respect for one another.

A good and wise bishop knows how to bring into being an atmosphere in which his priests are at one with him in pastoral charity, in his plans for action, in his desire for unity in Christ and under his vicar the pope, in his work for the sanctification of souls and in his very thoughts. Such union plunges all into an atmosphere of apostolic charity towards God and towards the souls in whom dwells the Holy Spirit. The life of a priest weighed down by good work and advancing years is at the same time a foretaste and a guarantee of heaven.

In conclusion, my dear brethren and colleagues in the priesthood, you must allow me, in the words of St Paul (Eph. iii, 14), to fall on my knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that Father from whom all fatherhood on heaven and earth takes its title, that he, out of the rich treasury of his glory, strengthen you through his Spirit with a power that reaches your innermost being, and that Christ may find a dwelling-place in your hearts.

At the same time, in the words of the aged Samuel, almost at the end of his life, I beg a special prayer of you. 'Speak to me in the Lord's presence and in that of his Anointed', for this 25th of November, the opening day of the diocesan synod, marks also the beginning of the seventy-seventh year of my life. No compliments are called for—I am old and white-haired. But I can say 'Here I am, O Lord' (1 Sam. xii). I am ready to cross to the other side. It would certainly be a joy to live longer among such good

sons as you, but I do not ask for a minute longer than the time that providence has allocated to me.

All that I demand of your filial piety is that you pray for me to be faithful right to the end to those principles, characteristic of a father and a bishop, which I have set before you today, like Samuel of whom we read:

'Here was a prophet of proved loyalty, and ever his word came true, such vision had he of the God that gives light . . . there must be an end at last to his life and to the age he lived in; but first he would make profession with the Lord and his Anointed for witnesses' (Eccli. xiv, 18-22).



SAINT DOMINIC¹

FELIX WATTS, O.P.

Doth not wisdom cry aloud and prudence put forth her voice? Standing in the top of the highest places, by the way, in the midst of the paths, beside the gates of the city, in the very doors she speaketh, saying, O men, to you I call, and my voice is to the sons of men! O little ones, understand subtlety, and ye unwise take notice! Hear, for I will speak of great things, and my lips shall be opened to preach right things. My mouth shall meditate truth and my lips shall hate wickedness. (Prov. viii, 1-7.)

MY dear brothers and sisters in St Dominic: I think that the Dominican vocation is the hardest of all, because it is the vocation of an apostle. It is true that all of us suffer from the results of Adam's sin. We can cry with the apostle of the Gentiles, 'Who is weak, and I am not weak?' We are all engaged in the struggle with our adversary, who goes about, like a roaring lion, to devour us. There is no Christian vocation, no Christian life, which does not bid or require us to do battle with the devil. But, whereas some may overcome him by flight, others by patient and silent endurance, and others may derive refreshment in the battle from the protection and seclusion of the cloister; the friar preacher is required to go like Samson, and fall upon the lion with his bare hands; and (seemingly impossible feat) to rend it, as one

¹ A sermon preached to the Dominican Tertiary Congress at Hawkesyard in August, 1958.

would a kid, in pieces. The fight is hard, the battlefield the open vineyard of the Lord, and the consolations few.

To fight thus requires courage and strength; and, as we go forth to battle, we are painfully conscious of our weakness and cowardice. Yet we advance into the heart of the fray in fear and trembling; knowing that without our master we can do nothing; and that if we are to overcome the world as apostles are meant to overcome it, this can only be done in him who has already overcome it and judged the prince of this world, because he is the holy mighty one, the holy deathless one; one whose hand was strong enough to be laid upon the cross to carry it, and whose courage great enough for him to be laid upon the cross, to be nailed to it. Then, we can do all things in him who strengthens us.

But meanwhile, as we fight, it is in the very providence of God himself that the fact of our own weakness should be forced upon the mind of each one of us; nor is the weakness apparent only in each. The order, whose habit we wear, is affected by it: and when we try to live the life the order requires of us, to fight the fight enjoined by its apostolic purpose, we find that we are mysteriously unable to achieve the single-mindedness in conflict upon which the outcome of the battle depends; we are constantly thwarted in our endeavour by our failure to live up to the ideals which the companionship of apostles, which is ours and to which we are called, imposes on us.

In our own midst, then, there is strife, because in our own hearts, in our own selves, there is strife. People, members of the same chapter perhaps, do not get on; we do not see eye to eye. We may be surprised at that; but why should we be surprised? How could it be that we see eye to eye with one another if we cannot see eye to eye with him who beholds all? I mean God, our creator. When in our own communities, then, there is strife, it is because in our own hearts, in our own selves, there is strife; the strife of the war of the flesh against the spirit; the spirit lusting against the flesh, and the flesh lusting against the spirit, as St Paul tells us; that lusting, that strife, which is born of original sin. That lustfulness is there because the flesh is so good, the spirit is so good; and because the spirit is so good it can lust and strive so well against the flesh, and the flesh too can lust and strive so well against the spirit.

We find ourselves, then, a little band of apostles, fallen human

beings, it is true, but apostles, nevertheless, in a fallen world; we are indeed under the same condemnation of weakness as those whom we wish to save from condemnation. They can point to us, and quote with force the proverb, 'Physician, heal thyself'. We find ourselves disconcertingly unable to point to the Khrushchevs, Malenkovs, and Hitlers of this world, and say: 'There, you are evil, I am good', because if this is the case with our own lives, our own deeds, the inward history of our own hearts condemns us. And yet, this is still true; that we are apostles. I am an apostle. 'Indeed, I am not worthy to be called an apostle', St Paul says, 'because I persecuted the Church of God.'

We cannot condemn the persecutor in the heathen, if the persecutor in ourselves is not dead. What has the life of St Dominic to teach us, embarrassed as we are by this difficulty? When he went, led purposely out of his way, through the thorns that scratched and cut his feet, and as he went, sang songs, as we read in his office, and were reading the other night, I think he gave us a solution. When the calamity of original sin took place, because all the glory of God's creation was to be returned back to God through the tongue of man, whom he had created to appreciate and enjoy that beauty, and whose duty it was to praise him for the creation he had made, that was frustrated; that could not take place; the stones and the trees and the stars and the sun and the moon had to remain tongueless, because man himself had lost the tongue with which he could praise God; sin had made praise die on his lips.

Sin again had destroyed human society. The society which had grown up in the place of that which God had made was a society which had lost its unity because it had lost its God. Man himself was fragmented, split, scattered into parts, into body, into soul, had lost his unity. It was because St Dominic had discovered the unity of the stones, the moon and the stars with God, of the thorns and the briars with God, that as the thorns and the briars lacerated his feet he could still find a voice to praise the God that had created them.

In the midst of the desolate ruin of society which was the South of France, a ruin which had first stimulated St Dominic to the foundation of a preaching order, an order of apostles, in the midst of those who had lost their tongues to praise their creator, he still found tongue to praise the creator for them. In the place of his

fallen nature, which had lost its tongue to praise its creator, he found in his own heart, through the grace of the sacraments, the indwelling Blessed Trinity; and knowing that the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, dwelt within him, had reconciled all the scattered and broken parts of his own nature, he found in the God who dwelt in him by grace, in the God who had re-created him out of the bits which sin had left, that had remoulded and refashioned him in the image of Christ, a tongue to praise that same God. And, therefore, the mouth of the just, as we sang in his mass, shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue speak prudence. His mouth meditates the wisdom of God; the wisdom of God who had created the world, but who, when the world had fallen to bits through sin, had recreated it again in grace to a yet more glorious, yet more noble pattern than the first had been. His mouth speaks prudence; because he is one chosen to direct those whose feet led to the valley of the shadow of death, back into the way of peace, into the way of reconciliation to God; and the fervour of the love which inspired his apostolate found its outlet in the overcoming of sin in himself first of all, and then in others. In himself by self-discipline and mortification; in others by preaching the word, and by encouragement, by kindness, and by love. And having overcome sin in himself, he was able to overcome sin and heresy in the society in which he lived.

It was not as though he took all the honour and glory of the battle to himself; that is certainly not the way of saints. He chose a little band of apostles, and with those he shared his ideas; and he was not merely sharing ideas and ideals; he was sharing the life of Christ of which he was the outward and so perfect expression because he had its inward spirit to the fullest degree. He shared it with that little band, and because it was the spirit of Christ that dwelt in that little band, therefore it grew. As we sang in the hymn yesterday: 'this is the little fountain of water which grew into the greatest of rivers, until it filled all Europe'; it went past Europe into the east and into the west so that the sound of the voice of the sons of St Dominic went out to the uttermost parts of the earth; and there it is still to this day.

And here we are in twentieth-century England, an England which is living on the aftermath of its Christian tradition, a tradition which it has repudiated; we are living in a land of

spiritual desolation, just as St Dominic was seven hundred years ago and more. Is it not right that the spiritual desolation in which we live should awaken in our hearts the same desires, the same sentiments, as they awoke in the heart of St Dominic? Can we say that they have done? Are we as anxious for the salvation of our neighbour as St Dominic was? Are we as anxious for our own salvation as was St Dominic? The first, perhaps, is the more important question, because obviously on the first comes the solution of the second. Have we the same purpose, the same apostolic spirit? Are we as ready to praise when the thorns lacerate our feet? That is the meaning of the Dominican liturgy, you know. It is all very well to come into the choir and sing the mass and office of St Dominic, but when we are alone, when we are carrying on our apostolate unappreciated and unknown, forgotten perhaps by the majority, when the thorns lacerate our feet, do these songs and these antiphons rise to our lips with the same readiness with which they rose to the lips of St Dominic? I don't know. All I know is that when I ask myself those questions, my own Dominican life makes me feel deeply ashamed, especially when I look at it in the light of the example of St Dominic; what I know, and what I have read about him. God help me! God help all of us!

Surely it is time that we renewed our fervour. How many of us live in towns where there are prisons; have you ever been to visit prisoners? How many of you live in the middle of discord? Have you tried to make peace? I ask myself and you these questions. How many of you live near sick people, Catholic, non-Catholics, it does not matter who they are; God loves them all; have we used the opportunity to visit them? Some of us have the substance of this world; have we been as free in disposing of it to those who need it, and as prudent, as we should have been?

Then there is the example of our daily lives. What about that? Do we preach Christ in our daily lives? What about the life in our chapters? Are we united, or do we hang upon unessential differences and allow division to creep in?

All these questions then, let us ask ourselves; let us re-examine ourselves, and let us freely condemn ourselves in so far as we fall short; and may the Spirit of truth, who alone can convince us of our own wretchedness and inadequacy as apostles and as Dominicans, lead us to a fuller and more vigorous expression of the life

of the order, of the life of St Dominic in England, that through our society the Dominican order, a redeemed society, part of the mystical body of Christ, we may set an example to the England that has lost a sense of society, that has degenerated into a mere bureaucracy; so that we as Dominicans may bring back the life of society to the nation to whom in the beginning St Dominic sent Friar Gilbert de Fresnay, and in which, to which, the Dominican order, before the reformation, contributed so much; may our contribution be not less than that of our brethren before that religious calamity. This depends on our own personal example, our own sincerity, the fullness with which we live our Dominican life. May St Dominic grant that fulness of Dominican life in us as he would have us live it.



A NOTE ON CONVERSION¹

YVES CONGAR, O.P.

CONVERSION means by and large changing the main principle which governs the shape and direction of a human life. As such it may be for better or for worse; a man may commit himself to evil, he may decide against God, he can adopt Marxism, if he is a Catholic he may turn to Greek Orthodoxy or to Protestantism, if he is a Christian he may become a Jew or join a religion alien to our tradition. In short, what a psychologist may call a conversion, a moralist or canonist may call an apostasy.

Moreover, a distinction can be drawn between a religious conversion and a moral conversion. The first is a matter of our ideas concerning God and the economy of salvation, a change of mind and an intellectual conviction which usually leads to the acceptance of the teaching of a religious body. and agreement with its practices. The second is a matter of putting moral principles into practice. This shift of behaviour can happen outside a religious context, or it may go with and be intimately related to a religious conversion, or it may take place within a religion hitherto professed but scarcely lived, and is then sometimes called a

¹ This article first appeared, in a different translation, in the *American Jesuit Quarterly Thought*, for the spring of 1958, and is published here by kind permission of the editors.

mystical conversion and is exemplified in lives of saints. The sense is echoed in the ecclesiastical term *conversi* applied to those who have turned from wordliness to the pursuit of the evangelical counsels within the framework of monasticism.

This change of heart is also a religious conversion inasmuch as faith now comes alive; previously God may have been assented to, but now his reality and claims are the mainspring of life. The old testament does not employ separate terms for the conversion of unbelievers to the true faith and for the conversion of the chosen people to the living 'knowledge of Yahweh' and to obedience to his will. There are two words. *Shubh* in Hebrew (*epistrephein* in Greek) means to turn, to turn round, to come back, and it is transferred from the local to the moral order to mean to convert oneself; the same has happened to the Latin *convertere* and its derivatives in Western languages.² Next, *nacham* in Hebrew means to moan, to sigh, and hence to repent, to do penance. The Greek equivalent is *metanoein*, to change one's mind, to recover oneself, to change sentiments, and hence to repent, to be converted. The Latin *poenitere* has not kept the full force of the Hebrew or Greek, for, affected by *poena* or punishment, it has been narrowed to signify onerous satisfaction or affliction. When *metanoein* has the nuance of repentance then its meaning in the old and new testaments is very close to that of *epistrephein*. One must do penance or be converted at the good tidings of a herald.³

* * *

A conversion is a personal step taken by a moral adult, that is to say, by a person who holds himself responsible and who makes the choice his own. All manner of psychological and moral movements are involved, all manner of cognitive and affective motivations enter into the *ensemble*. Environmental factors are present, sometimes as inhibitions, and so also are constitutional factors; it may well be asked whether an atavism may not sometimes influence the passage from one type of religion to another. Indeed conversion is a highly complex affair, morally, socially, historically, perhaps even genetically, and the study of it from the purely psychological point of view is of great interest, even to the narrowest theologian.

² Mark, i, 15; vi, 12. Matt. xii, 41, Luke, v, 32; xxiv, 47. Acts xx, 21, xxvi, 20. Matt. iii, 8. Luke, xv, 7.

³ cf. Deut. xxx, 10. Jer. iii, 14. Osee xiv, 2. Amos iv, 8. Is. vi, 10; lv, 7. Jonas ii, 13. Matt. xiii, 15. Mark iv, 12. Luke xxii, 32. Acts iii, 19; xxvi, 18; xxviii, 27. 1 Peter ii, 25.

Their great variety makes classification difficult; nevertheless, given a sufficient documentation, conversions could be grouped under specific headings—sudden and gradual, those which follow and those which precede reasoned reflection, individual and collective. It may happen that the new synthesis dawns suddenly and the arguments are worked out afterwards. As for individual conversions, the Church prefers them; Cardinal Vaughan said, that 'the conversion of souls one by one, precisely as they enter the world and depart from it to their particular judgment, is the result that I look for'. The conversion of a religious community, as at Caldey, falls into this category when a number of individual conversions are related to and contemporary with one another. Religious psychology, however, must allow for collective conversions, for there have been in the past, and doubtless still are in the mission field, cases where whole groups follow their leader, and evangelical revivalism sometimes produces mass movements.

Psychological explanations of the fact may bring out some real aspects, but they stay at the level of phenomena and do not really reach the heart of the matter. Sometimes they treat conversion as a crisis in adolescence; sometimes they are affected by the Protestant literature emphasizing the feeling of sin being overcome through total surrender to grace. William James regards conversion as the end of unconscious incubation of sentiments and ideas which appear, or rather explode, in our consciousness when an emotional shock or a fresh insight releases the pressure of our desire to cast away ill-fitting and worn-out articles of our past. One over-simplification is the psychoanalytical teaching, which limits conversion to unstable and non-integrated personalities who can find security only by suppressing one part of themselves, or who commit themselves to a dominant object which calms them and serves to compensate for their failures elsewhere.

Psychologists give us descriptions rather than explanations, and they can be fair enough so far as they go. A conversion may doubtless resolve a period of disequilibrium and insecurity. It may come when a person has been uprooted, perhaps by a shameful experience, intensely felt, or by tragedy, grief, war, captivity, illness. In fact even a simple change of environment can be conducive. Yet we can, and should, try to go beyond the

psychological transcription of the facts. Two considerations are here relevant.

First, it is not enough to examine *how* things come about; we should also seek to understand *what* they mean. Judgments of morality and conscience have content and 'intentionality'—a reaching out for something. So we must take into account *what* converts feel they are after. The convergence of their testimonies is impressive. It points not only to the existence of God but also to his action on their souls. Their experience, they are certain, is not only directed to him but also conducted by him. Their accounts fit in remarkably well with the writings of the theologians on the effects of grace.

Next, one and the same fact permits of different interpretations according to our system of reference. Thus from a physiological and medical angle, St John the Baptist died of a haemorrhage, but from a theological angle his death was an act of martyrdom, and the holiness and real character of this witness can be appreciated only in the history of human salvation. Similarly, to the psychologist a conversion may appear merely as the culmination of a process which he has more or less accurately and fully observed, though he will be wise to recognize data that escape being resolved into his laws: for instance, attempts to explain the conversion of St Paul in terms of some internal conflict can be rather ridiculous. The theologian, however, introduces other criteria from the doctrines of faith and morals; revelation informs us about God and his providential deeds, about the virtues and the gifts of the Spirit. A conversion wrought by God is not merely a psychological fact, it is a religious fact; it is not merely an end, it is a beginning; it is not merely finding refuge after a storm, but voyaging out to boundless charity, a chapter in the return of rational creatures to God under the sign of the cross.

* * *

Classical theology treats of conversion mainly in its study of the decisive act of justification.⁴ There, above all, is manifested the gracious and sovereign mercy of God, which can work, as in the baptism of babies, without any conscious human act on our part. It is rather curious to note a swing in Protestantism from the early insistence on pure grace and man's passivity to doubts

⁴ St Thomas. *Summa Theologica*, 1a-2ae. cxiii. Council of Trent, Sess. vi, especially c.5 and 6. cf. R. Aubert, *Le problème de l'acte de foi*. Louvain, 1945, p. 76.

about infant baptism and making much of the role of religious experience in conversion. Protestants, however, who are faithful to the old sacramental tradition keep the distinction between regeneration wrought at baptism by an act of God and conversion requiring a man's own free act (cf. Job iii, 7; Acts iii, 19).

Conversion ordinarily comes about in the conscious life of a grown-up, and supposes a process of preparation and gradual approach. Rarely is it instantaneous and identified with justification, though, of course, theologians of the school of St Augustine and St Thomas will stress the need of actual divine grace acting on the mind and will;⁵ grace is paramount, precedes any merit on our part, and works from the beginning. Yet they also maintain the reality and the proper role of human freedom. We shall not here seek to analyse the problem of the interplay of grace and freewill, but to indicate, from the Bible and the experience of converts, how the two join in a kind of dialogue, a reciprocity which can be compared to a game of dominoes, when one places his six against another's.

Note how those who discover faith are first confronted with a sign which leads them to the truth of Jesus Christ. They declare themselves for or against, according as their profound disposition is towards opening out or closing up the self. This appears particularly in St John's gospel. What is the quality of their love? If it is responsive to the appeal and invitation of Another, then it can go as far as charity, and in the light of faith God will be loved above all. Theologians examine the typical phases of conversion-justification, namely faith, hope, the fear of God, initial love, repentance, firm purpose of amendment; but they are well aware that the movement of life is not always a respecter of classifications; it is synthetic and concrete, not entirely covered by the analytic and abstract.

* * *

Finally let us reflect on the apologetic value of conversions. A conversion is an affair between a human person and God; to use it to grind an axe or to turn it to account can be an odious business. Nevertheless we are called to give glory to God, to be saved within the Church, through and with one another. The new testament exhibits conversions as miracles and signs for the benefit of those who do not believe. St Paul was prepared to parade his

⁵ H. Bouillard. *Conversion et grâce chez S. Thomas d'Aquin*. Paris, 1944.

own case, and the fact of conversion to the Church belongs to the mark of holiness, to the *signum levatum in nationes* spoken of by the Vatican Council (Sess. III, c. 3).

We can begin by discussing moral miracles in a purely scientific manner. When a fact is observed which cannot be explained on the ordinary premises of human psychology and history, and when all the natural possibilities have been exhausted, then we can reasonably infer divine intervention. Rigorous proof is difficult, more so in the case of a moral miracle than with a physical miracle, since psychological science is engaged, the resources of which are neither too well defined nor even explored. Only that part is miraculous which withstands the severest critical investigation. The limited scope of this must be recognized, and I would refer back to what I have said about any method which restricts itself to phenomena. For the fact of a conversion must be taken as a whole; it is not enough to reduce its elements one by one to their natural causes—it would be like saying that Napoleon's genius consisted in defeating enemy armies separately and to leave it at that.

The whole bears witness to the presence and action of God. It is not a challenge to the purely rational intelligence merely, but to the whole man who is in search of holiness and whose heart is open to God. The moral miracle of a conversion is less a proof than a sign. Too much must not be demanded in the way of rational demonstration. Experience teaches us that the intellectual reasons at work may be not compelling. Subjectively they serve to correct the convert's perspective; objectively, they may be weak or ambiguous when placed on the plane of scientific reasons which can be exchanged among critical minds. We are dealing with a practical choice, and there no man is exactly like another in his difficulties and his needs.

Then also we should acknowledge that conversion also works in reverse, away from the Church. This poses a problem for Catholic apologetics. Here the theological setting should be borne in mind. Apologetics should not require more, or something else, in this matter than what theology requires. St Paul told the men of Athens that God made all nations of men to seek him, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us (Acts xvii, 27). Grace works outside the visible frontiers of the Church to bring men to God and to the

salvation of which the incarnation is the key. Every conversion to God finds its truth and fulness in the Church of Jesus Christ. In this question especially, apologetics must avoid superficial haste and the spirit of triumph. It does not have to prove more than theology affirms.

Should we desire to make converts? The answer is evident. Who can blame a man for trying to bring others to share in a truth he holds, or a Catholic for trying to attract to the Church the greatest possible number, of Christians and non-Christians alike? Yet this does not imply that any means whatsoever can be adopted to secure adherence. The apostolate is not a form of propaganda like any other, it is not out for sale promotion, it is not a recruiting campaign, a search for clients. It stems from supernatural faith and charity, and therefore respects and safeguards liberty, sincerity, candour. Its purpose is to help men to fulfil themselves in God and with God, according to the plan of salvation willed by God in Christ and his Church. 'I came that they may have life, and have it more abundantly' (John x, 10).

In entering this communion a person is asked to renounce no truth he previously held or good he lived by, but to restore them and integrate them in a richer life. Conversion is a fulfilment. The term *profession of faith* is more correct and comprehensive and less offensive than *abjuration*, and the Holy Office has preferred the positive to the negative in recently approved formulas. In this light conversions to the Church can be considered without the sharpness of polemics and confessional rivalries.



AMERICAN CONVERT WORK

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

EACH year in the United States 150,000 converts enter the Catholic Church. Considered by itself, this is a rather impressive figure. But when we consider that ours is a nation of some 170 million people (well over 100 million of them still outside the Church) and when we remember that there are some 40 million potential Catholic apostles, these convert statistics leave us little cause for complacency. The trial balance is

even less encouraging when we recall that a considerable number of Catholics lapse from the Church every year. 'But as far as conversions are concerned', says Fr Sheerin in *The Catholic World*, 'Catholicism and Protestantism in America are like two great forces that have reached a stalemate in competing for the minds of Americans. Neither side is making any great gains.'

But the prospect of a nation's conversion must go beyond mere statistics. The mysterious workings of God's grace must be taken into account. There are moral forces at work, which elude the calculations of the actuary, that can accelerate the growth or the decline of the Church in any land. And many Catholics see two such moral forces that may, if our zeal is equal to our God-given opportunities, win increasing numbers of converts in the years ahead.

First, there is the current 'return to religion' in the United States. Americans have never been an irreligious people. Militant atheists have never been more than a negligible minority. Nor have our sceptical professors or writers achieved decisive influence. But if religion did not suffer greatly from all-out attack, it suffered severely from sheer neglect. A creeping erosion set in which progressively weakened the spiritual vitality of American Protestantism. Church-going declined and Bible-reading ceased to be a daily practice for many. The sturdy conviction of God's majesty and justice, which had been so firmly ingrained in the 250 Protestant sects of our nation, lost much of its influence in daily life. Catholic and Protestant leaders agreed that secularism (as the American hierarchy in their annual statement a decade ago put it) 'was doing more than anything else to blight our heritage of Christian culture'.

Numerous forces contributed to cause this spiritual anaemia. But there is little doubt that a high standard of living, labour-saving devices, multiplied creature comforts and innumerable means of amusement induced a forgetfulness of the things that matter. God and the future life seemed less and less relevant. To a people who had become increasingly self-sufficient, religion had lost something of its former urgency. In such a spiritual climate it is understandable that enquirers were fewer than we might have wished.

In recent years, however, this trend has been reversed. Many forces of religion, which a generation ago seemed to be slowly

collapsing by default, are now reorganized, revitalized, and constitute a fighting body achieving notable victories. Not only is church membership on the rise but church attendance has vastly improved. The increase in church construction is obvious for all to see. Press, television, radio and movies—all reflect this trend by increased attention to religion. Politics, too, contributes its evidence. 'A professed unbeliever', notes one observer 'would be anathema to either political party. It is a rare campaigner who does not mention God in each of his talks. Some of the speeches of public officials sound almost like sermons. Church attendance is expected of men in high political office.'

It should be acknowledged that the impelling motives of some people and the quality of the religion to which many are returning are severely criticized. Most of us who are actively engaged in convert work, however, believe that these critics overlook numerous sound elements in the revival. Religion is debated on the college campus; St Thomas has returned to many universities; scientists are more conscious of the limitations of their special disciplines; and educators endeavour to restore religious instruction to young Americans. Nor are penance, humble worship and dependence on God absent from the religious practice of throngs of people.

We are not blind to the selfishness, superficiality and unconscious irreverence that often accompanies the return to religion. But we recall that the first steps in conversion are frequently awkward and often unpromising. There were stages in the journey of Augustine and Newman—not to mention that of the prodigal son—when their ultimate conversion might have seemed highly unlikely. Those who are in daily contact with non-Catholic inquirers are more inclined to agree with Bishop Sheen who believes that 'ten million Americans are ripe for conversion' and that 'the age of indifference to religion is passed'. Insecurity, frustration and fear in an age which sits on a global powder-keg has restored respect for religion. And a huge proportion of this interest is directed towards the Catholic Church. Once our main obstacle was apathy; today we must multiply means of communicating with those whose concern with religion has been revived.

The second favourable element is the changed status of the Catholic in America and his growing awareness of his apostolic

obligations. A great English churchman, a few years ago, described the new situation of the Church in England in the phrase 'out of the catacombs'. A similar situation in America is often characterized as 'out of the ghetto'.

In slightly over 150 years, Catholics in America have advanced numerically from 25 thousand to about 40 million. This unprecedented growth was largely the result of immigration. Heroic efforts were made to form this body, without unnecessary delay, into an indigenous church and to capitalize on the good will that that has never been wanting among a certain number of non-Catholics. But providence decreed that it take longer than was expected by the optimistic. The urgent problems that confronted the American hierarchy were mountain high. There was the need for priests, churches and schools to care for the unending streams of newcomers; they had to contend with the poverty and lack of education of the immigrants; a constant trial was the bigotry, dislike and discrimination from which Catholics suffered. It is not surprising that for long decades many Catholics adopted an attitude of minority defensiveness and that many withdrew to a sort of ghetto. One can understand why many were inclined to say, 'Why be concerned with conversions? We have enough to do to take care of our own.'

This relative isolation and spirit of defensiveness, while it has not ceased entirely, is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. The Church has become solidly established; Catholics have advanced socially, economically and culturally; and they have become a part of the main stream of our national life. Cardinal Newman once noted that 'the Church must be prepared for converts, as well as converts prepared for the Church'. And there is massive evidence to show that the Catholic in America has taken many giant strides towards this necessary preparation. A symbol of this changed status could be recognized when the National Council of Catholic Men recently held their biennial national convention in Detroit. Hundreds of Catholic men, from every corner of the nation, participated in workshops and study groups on practically every aspect of the lay apostolate. Twenty-five years ago, these Catholic men would have been content with a mammoth parade to exhibit Catholic numerical strength. Today they search for means of applying their Christian knowledge, influence and example in every area of our national life.

The late Fr James Martin Gillis, in one of his last articles, summed up the significance of all this as follows: 'Here in the United States we have made great progress since our grandfathers' day. The advance has been not only in numbers, wealth, social position, but—much better—in the interest and the esteem that our fellow citizens feel in us, our Church and our religion.'

It is impossible in a brief summary to do more than allude to some of the means employed to help win converts in America. These instruments—while not as numerous or effective as they might be—do constitute a vigorous apostolate. And it is constantly attracting an increasing number of apostles among priests and lay people.

'Long before we have made it fashionable to be Catholic we may have made it fashionable to sympathize with Catholicism', Hilaire Belloc once remarked. Before large-scale conversions are won in America an ancient wall of division between Catholics and our separated brethren must be breached. The prevailing view of the Church held by the generality of people needs to be improved as a necessary preparation for faith. And an enormous effort is being made to make fruitful contact with non-Catholics, to dispel their ignorance of the Church and to help them understand her aims, teachings and practices.

Considerable credit is due to numerous Catholic scholars who have won respect and a hearing in intellectual circles. They do not attempt to win converts directly. But they bring the wisdom of Catholicism to bear on the huge problems that beset our nation. In their efforts to work for the common good and throw light on the role of religion in our pluralist society, they have earned the confidence of non-Catholic scholars. And they are winning understanding—if not always acceptance—for the philosophical and theological principles of Catholicism and their relevance to the complex problems of our time.

There is no medium of communication which Catholics do not employ. Press, radio, television—locally or on a national scale—bring into millions of homes Catholic doctrinal or moral teachings, or programmes designed to acquaint non-Catholics with some aspect of Catholic life. Catholic information centres, correspondence or home study courses by mail, study clubs, parochial libraries, pamphlet racks in railway stations—these are some of the many means that are employed to attract attention to

the Church, convey information and instruction and improve the good will of our neighbours. Highly significant, and of great promise, is the fact that the tone of Catholic apologetics tends to be more eirenic. Whereas in former days many were apt to stress polemic tactics and defence of the Church, there is a more widespread attempt today to employ the 'friendly approach'.

Two fairly recent developments, one on the level of the diocese and the other at the parochial level, have proved to be especially effective. The first is the establishment of a bureau of information attached to the chancery in 60 of the 138 archdioceses and dioceses of the country. In 1956 the audit of the American Institute of Management attracted world-wide attention by its critical judgment on the manner in which the Catholic Church handled its 'public relations'. 'Nor does the Church handle its affairs particularly well on the public-information or publicity front', the report noted. 'First in the use of the word "propaganda", the Holy See has failed to utilize the best talent in the field. Time and again it put its worst vestment forward, when the best side could easily be shown.' For long decades, except for notable exceptions, this criticism might equally have been directed at American Catholics.

The Catholic Church with her institutions and personnel looms large in American life. Newsworthy events of all sorts are happening daily, and the news agencies are eager to report these Catholic activities fully and accurately. Too often, they are thwarted by the reluctance of Catholics to provide them with the facts. In order to get our full measure of favourable attention, the priest in charge of the diocesan bureau of information remains in constant contact with the news agencies. And he can always be reached by them whenever they wish information concerning the Church or her activities. And many of these directors hold institutes for the clergy, religious and laity of the diocese to coach them in the art of public relations.

An attempt to create better understanding of Catholicism among our more immediate neighbours is a plan called the 'Open House'. On a designated Sunday afternoon, non-Catholics within a parish are all invited to visit the local Catholic church. Lay guides are on hand to welcome them and conduct them on a guided tour of the house of prayer. Every detail of the church and its appointments—and their significance in the religious life of Catholics—is explained. From the holy water font to altar,

tabernacle, and sacristy, non-Catholics have an opportunity to learn and to ask questions. As groups complete the tour they are escorted to a place where refreshments are served and where they can meet the pastor and curates and the teaching sisters. Towards the end of the afternoon a sermon is preached and the day closes with benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The 'Open House' idea has proved to be so effective that all the parishes of an entire diocese have sometimes sponsored such an event simultaneously. One of the most ambitious exemplifications of this plan was recently tried by all the Negro parishes of a section of New York City. The reaction of a Negro reporter on the staff of the daily paper *New York Journal American* is typical. 'To a Protestant reporter', he writes, 'the warmth and friendliness of the Catholic priests, nuns and laymen were immediately evident and gratifying. Persons outside the Catholic faith too seldom have an opportunity to talk informally with priests and nuns . . . there were no high-pressure propagandists. But, throughout it all, you could not escape the obvious peace and serenity which the devout Catholic seems to find in his religious life.'

Those whose favourable attention has been won are ultimately invited to attend an enquiry class or information class at one of the parishes or information centres. Many American priests were once inclined to prefer individual instruction to group instruction of converts. But with the increase in the number of enquirers and greater experience in the time-honoured, manifold advantages of group instruction, classes for converts have greatly multiplied. These classes usually meet twice a week and extend over a period of three months. And each enquirer has private meetings with the priest-instructor in so far as these are helpful or necessary.

Priests who conduct these courses usually arrange three series each year. On four Sundays preceding the opening of each course, an announcement is made at all the masses concerning the nature and purpose of the course and the need of fervent prayer for its success. Each parishioner is urged to invite non-Catholic relatives, friends or neighbours who have manifested any degree of goodwill, curiosity or interest in the Church. Since our Catholic laity are intimately acquainted with the most likely prospects and are in the best position to extend a warm personal invitation, it is easily seen why we find this the best means of recruiting well-attended classes.

Next, the parish census cards are examined and a list is made of all the non-Catholics who are married to Catholics. The pastor addresses a cordial personal letter to each of them, acquainting them with the details of the course, the advantages of attending it, and inviting them to come for one or all the lessons. Many priests find this letter to the non-Catholics in a mixed marriage second only to the zeal of the laity in winning the attendance of non-Catholic enquirers.

Since it is an established principle of good publicity to try to attract favourable attention in as many ways as possible, priests normally employ additional means of publicizing the class. Placards are usually placed in the vestibule of the parish church, and in the principal shops of the vicinity; leaflets are given to the laity as they leave the church after mass; leaflets are sometimes placed in all the mailboxes of the homes in the vicinity; and, in some places, lay people make a personal call on all the people within the parish. Some priests advertise in the daily or diocesan newspaper; place notices in trains and buses; and procure time on radio or television. Each locality has its own obstacles and opportunities in achieving effective publicity; and experience is the best test of what means are to be employed.

The course is usually advertised as an opportunity for all types of enquirers who seek accurate information regarding the Church. They are invited to attend one or all the lessons and are assured that no previous decision to become a Catholic is required. They are told that our main purpose is to provide an objective presentation of Catholic doctrines and practices and that any final step must be a matter of personal conviction and co-operation with God's grace. Questions are invited on the lesson for the evening or on topics previously discussed. Other questions may be addressed to the priest who is available before and after every class. A catechism is given each enquirer, and a supply of leaflets, pamphlets and books are at his disposal. The priest-instructor encourages private interviews with each enquirer, and tactfully seeks out those who are reticent. No catechumen is baptized who has not had a certain number of private conversations with the priest who conducts the class. Many priests, three or four times during the series, provide mimeographed tests which are answered in writing by the enquirers. These tests are usually extremely simple, but they enable the priest to gauge the progress of his catechumens.

This general plan offers to a non-Catholic a proposal that is obviously cordial and sincere, one that appeals to his sense of fairness and one that reduces to a minimum the difficulties of undertaking a comprehensive course in Catholic teaching. It also presents our Catholic laity with a practical programme for their zeal in the personal apostolate to Christ's 'other sheep'. And it enables any priest to meet non-Catholics half way, regardless of their original motive or degree of interest, and provides him with a means for facilitating their instruction.

Of course, some non-Catholics who come have already decided to enter the Church. Others approach merely out of curiosity and attend only a few lectures. But for those who complete the course, a familiar pattern can be recognized. Prejudices dissolve, obscurity or ignorance give way to understanding, and motives undergo a gradual purification. The Church is fully recognized as the true spiritual home of all mankind. Enquirers come to recognize that she offers the only means of fulfilling our best and noblest aspirations and is the only teacher who really answers the deepest questions of the soul. The accumulative effect of elucidating each of the mysteries of faith and their inner connection—along with an ever deepening appreciation of the means of grace—beget conviction. Meanwhile, the campaign for prayer and sacrifice—among the school children, nuns, the sick, the daily memento at mass of the priest, and the devotions of the parishioners—have won rich graces. When the course is about two thirds completed, approximately seventy-five per cent of the catechumens will have decided to become Catholics.

Within the last decade especially, there have been numerous developments in the manner of conducting these classes. In some parishes, instead of one priest undertaking the entire burden, all the priests participate. Sometimes two or three priests alternate in giving the lectures. In other parishes, one priest gives a ten-minute review of the matter previously covered, a second gives the lecture of the evening, and a third answers the questions. And there are numerous variations on these methods. Their principal merit is to engage all the local clergy in the parish campaign for converts and to benefit by the special individual quality that each can bring.

There is a growing tendency to enlist the full talents of the laity in conducting these classes. I know a priest who has selected and trained 100 lay people and has organized them in five *praesidia*

of the Legion of Mary. These legionaries enroll newcomers to the course; take charge of the films, slides and charts used as visual aids; distribute the tests and correct the answers when returned; and are responsible for the rather extensive clerical work in a programme that wins 250 converts each year. These legionaries also participate in the actual instruction of converts. When an enquirer indicates that his interest is more than casual, a lay person—chosen according to similarity in age, education and background—is assigned to assist him. This legionary takes him for a tour of the church; coaches him in the use of missal, rosary, manner of participating at mass and in receiving the sacraments. He gives advice to the enquirer regarding suitable pamphlets and books. And he instructs the catechumen on those lessons which the latter is sometimes obliged to miss.

The ideals and principles of the new catechetical movement are having an even deeper influence on American convert work. The revival in catechetics brings new insights to our aims and methods in the field of religious education. Just a year ago, two Chicago priests who are noted for their devotion to the lay apostolate and to convert work, published a new catechism for adults. *Life in Christ* by James Killgallon and Gerard Weber (which Sheed and Ward is publishing in England under another title) is a major event in American catechetics and in the apostolate to non-Catholics. Within twelve months, the demand for this new catechism was so great that three editions totalling 250,000 copies have been sold. And translations are being prepared in Japanese, Chinese, Malayan, and one for South India. This text represents a middle ground between the older manuals and the strictly kerygmatic approach in catechetics.

Older catechisms for converts were apt to be severely logical in their approach, concerned with proofs and answers to Protestant objections, deficient in the use of scripture and liturgy, and sought to give information rather than to form souls. *Life in Christ* certainly does not neglect logic, or omit proofs; there is no fundamental doctrine in the traditional texts which it omits. But it aims not only to teach a doctrine but to proclaim the 'good news' of Christ. It seeks to instruct while forming disciples. In addition to a concern with theology and philosophy, it takes into account the psychology of learning, uncovers the riches of scripture and initiates the catechumen into the treasures of the liturgy. Awaken-

ing doctrinal convictions are accompanied by some specific Catholic practice—and practical suggestions to this end conclude each chapter. It is impossible, in this brief reference, to do full justice to this new catechism or to convey any real measure of its significance. Many of us are convinced, however, that it is actually a return to an earlier and more salutary method of forming new Christians to the image of Christ.

A brief word should be said here of our increasing concern with the need for after-care of converts. 'Don't merely make converts: keep them!' is the slogan of Mgr Leonard B. Nienaber, who has distinguished himself in this phase of our apostolate. Twenty-five years ago, when a convert was received, comparatively little was done in many parishes to assure his adjustment or assist his growth to full Christian maturity. A convert was often left to shift for himself. Priests who have studied this matter tell us that as a consequence of our unconscious neglect, sixteen per cent of our converts lapse from the faith.

Today we expend greater efforts to ease the period of transition, deepen the convert's inner appreciation of the faith and his growth in holiness, and to enlist his talents for winning other converts. The Guilds of St Paul constitute a national organization, founded by Mgr Nienaber, to provide this indispensable assistance. These guilds welcome the newly baptized, along with their relatives and friends, and arrange social, educational and spiritual activities. As converts become Catholics 'to the manner born' it is expected that they join other societies in the parish and cease to think of themselves as latecomers to the Church. Other convert centres have less formal organization, but encourage new converts to attend more advanced courses, to make retreats, to seek spiritual direction, and to avail themselves of library facilities.

We certainly are not converting our country rapidly, nor is our potential zeal being fully utilized. There is, however, a devoted, enterprising apostolate to American non-Catholics underway. And it is supported by many who pray for more labourers and for the supernatural graces without which all labour for souls must remain sterile.

THE CATHOLIC EVIDENCE GUILD IN THE POTTERIES

DENNIS SALT

I

IT is 1936—or could be '39, or '29, or any of the pre-war years. The Catholic Evidence Guild speaker, in the market square, is surrounded by a motley crowd; some noisy, and angrily putting their point of view; others genuinely interested, and asking a carefully-thought-out question; some frankly bored, but hoping for blood to enliven the proceedings.

How many of us were familiar with the scene—and few of us realized the full significance of what we saw.

A speaker? Yes, we saw the speaker—heard him too—and were impressed with his lively answer, and obvious desire to impart his own love for his faith, to those who would listen to him. We rather wished that we had his courage, or his gifts, or both. But we didn't see the point of his speaking in the market square; it wasn't quite respectable, not the sort of thing that a real Catholic would drag his faith to. Pity he couldn't find a better outlet for his talents; maybe one day he would: anyhow we hoped so; this sort of caper just didn't do any *good*, you see.

Later on, years later, perhaps, we came across the odd person who had been influenced by the C.E.G., and had joined the Church. Very often we would find that the convert had himself graduated to the platform, and our discovery would bring about a vague sense of uneasiness, in that we wondered whether we, too, ought to have had some share in the work.

But the *speaker*—what did he *do* in his daily life? What sort of impact did this articulate, heckle-trained oddity have on those he met in the factory, in the office, and the pub? We had heard him with his crowd. Was it possible that the moment he dismounted his platform he relapsed into cloistered silence, and that, like the scout who had 'done his good turn today', he had no further interest in the conversion of England?

What an opportunity missed, if he did!

Here was a contact man; one of the finger-tips of the mystical body of Christ; trained, knowledgeable, confident. Projected by

circumstances into a non-Catholic environment, and revelling in the prospects. A light to the revelation of the gentiles.

How did he work? What results did he get? *How many converts did he get?*

The answers are fairly simple. He certainly got very few converts; sometimes he was fortunate, and helped in some way to direct an acquaintance to the true Church. But the nature of the job in hand was not primarily to direct people to the Church, but to get them first of all to believe in God at all. Small use talking to a man about infallibility when he hasn't got round to real conviction about the existence of God. Or about Mary being truly the Mother of God when he doesn't by any means think that Christ himself is God.

The guildsman's job has not so much been that of a seed-scatterer as that of a ploughman, preparing the ground for the seed which is to come. Breaking down prejudice, by showing that the Church has an *answer* to non-Catholic doubts; bringing the unbeliever to be conscious of life beyond the grave; teaching him to recognize the voice of his own conscience, and teaching him the child's act of contrition—just in case. Getting him to *pray*: maybe he has not prayed for years. Teaching him respect for his own faculties, in love and marriage. Letting him see justice, not merely in words, but in business judgments. Living with him. Loving him. Leading him; praying for him; hoping for him; identifying yourself with him; understanding him; realizing his background and training; respecting his sincerity, and realizing his potential holiness and greatness. Showing above all that the Catholic Church *cared* about him.

And so it went on. Once a week, or sometimes twice, the apostle of the market square would emerge, and perform in public. But far more important always was the hidden, daily life of private contact; hidden with the life of prayer—for to every guildsman has been made evident, not from infused knowledge, or especially enlightened understanding, but from bitter personal experience, the truth that of himself he can do nothing.

Daily mass, where possible, is an essential to guild activity, and has always been so, from the nature of the calling; and with daily mass daily living, in the presence of God; and with that, a hope that something of the hidden life will show itself, and have some attraction for those around.

II

As the years went by, and the war came along, the guildsman was acquiring a fund of knowledge. Not just knowledge of his faith, but knowledge of those towards whom his efforts were directed. And with that knowledge, a realization that there existed no tailor-made answer to the question of conversion—for surely every person that he met was a study on his own. Some believed in God; some didn't; some read the gospels; most didn't. Some had moral problems holding them back, long after intellectual conviction had been attained. Others had reached standards of holiness which might be envied, and just didn't get the gift of faith. Each *person* must be understood.

With this understanding came a desire to identify himself more and more with the non-Catholic mind; and with the war, and the aftermath of war, came the opportunity.

By a strange paradox, it was the dwindling crowds, a decrease experienced at all types of outdoor meetings, which gave the C.E.G. new opportunities of supplementing outdoor by indoor activity. The scheme was *personal contact with non-Catholic groups* and *personal contact with Catholic societies*, this latter with a view to training other Catholics in contact-work.

Personal contact with non-Catholic groups sprang always from personal friendship, or works contact, with individuals. The first was an accident, in that a Methodist group once found itself without a speaker for its weekly meeting. The friendly Catholic—who also happened to be a C.E.G. speaker—was asked, in desperation, to deputize. 'Something non-controversial, of course', was the instruction.

Tongue in cheek, I suggested 'The Appeal of Catholicism', and received the horrified rejection anticipated. Eventually a slightly disturbed and anxious friend settled for 'The Church and Social Justice'. This was far and away from normal guild curriculum, but it was a way in, and the opportunity could not be missed.

The meeting was a great success; here was a *plan*; here was something which the Methodist group could understand. Here was the Church in action. Questions were plentiful. As I happen also to be a works manager, I could illustrate the application of the principles of the social encyclicals from experience in the factory. As an introduction and a contact, the evening was

invaluable. Confidence was established that the Church was almost Christian, and this was a real step forward.

'Would the speaker come again?'

To that there could be but one answer.

The second meeting followed a few weeks later. This time the subject was left to me, and in order to develop the spirit of enquiry in the audience, I chose 'The use of reason in arriving at a knowledge of God'. This covered the proofs for his existence, and the attributes of God, and 'went over big'. Certainly there was an abundance of questions, and again it was evident that the delivery of solid teaching was a new experience for the audience.

A statement from one of those present will indicate the point: 'Why don't *we* study our faith like this? Surely our faith would be *strengthened* if we tackled it in the same way.'

The meeting was lively, but friendly. When I met one of the listeners a week later, it was a tonic to hear that the subject-matter of the talk had been used as the basis for the Sunday sermon.

Still we were only on the fringe of things, and an awful lot of ground to cover. Friendships were growing; I began to know members of the group by name. They treated me with courtesy and respect, but far more important was my coming to realize that here were a body of men doing all that they could to lead the Christian life. They were sincere; they were real; they had virtue of a high order; they were genuinely interested in the things of God. Their weekly gathering together to study sacred things was a challenge to any comparable body of Catholic men.

A third meeting was arranged before I left the hall; here was a new experience for the C.E.G. Non-Catholics *asking* me to speak! Subject? 'The Resurrection of Christ.' The ground was extending. So was the audience, for it was announced that for the next talk, members of a neighbouring Methodist church were to be invited. It all seemed too good to be true.

The resurrection talk coincided with Easter, and again was treated objectively. Evidence for and against the doctrine; the normal Catholic exposition from the scriptures; chapter and verse; our Lord's foretelling of his resurrection; the teaching of the apostles; the facts as recounted in the gospels; the attacks on the doctrine; the 'swoon theory'; the 'hallucination theory'; the problem of the empty tomb; did the Romans steal the body of our Lord, or did the Jews, or the apostles—and so on.

The result exceeded all hopes. There was genuine pleasure among those present at the Church's treatment of the central fact of Christianity. There were questions on the resurrection of our Lord, and many more on our own resurrection, and, following on from that, many questions on the Church's teaching on heaven and the beatific vision. When could I come again?

By now there was a 'Jack and Bill' relationship, and a growing audience—for before the next meeting there came a written request for the C.E.G. speaker to address the birthday meeting of the largest group of men in local Methodist circles, at the local Central Hall.

This was a 'Sunday best' night, with refreshments, musical items and all, and with the Catholic speaker as the main attraction. Here the requested topic was 'The position of men in the Church'.

The title was wide enough to admit of anything, and I treated it under three headings, namely: study; prayer; and work.

Under 'study' came the use of reason in arguing from the things around us to the things of God; the use of the highest faculty of intelligence in the service of God. The study of the scriptures, with a new thought on old scenes (Have I ever before really got the full message out of this or that particular scene?). One scene treated in detail, the case of the palsied man, let down through the roof to Christ; what did I really make of this? I thought I knew the piece, but had I ever before really got to the depths of its implications?—and so on.

Then the Catholic idea of prayer. The whole of life one continuous act in the presence of God. The morning offering. The simplicity of meditation; an illustration of the translation of a scene in our Lord's life into terms of action in my own. Sorrow for sin; a short act of contrition. The rosary wasn't mentioned at this stage, nor was the mass. The listeners were first of all to get the basic idea of the Catholic mind on union with God; timing is the essence of success in developing the Church's mind to the non-Catholic; patience, and a firm determination not to rush the moment, must always be observed.

Work followed prayer, as the logical expression of the person's loving service of Christ. Here the activities of the various orders of the Church illustrated the point of good works flowing naturally from a life of prayer. Care for the poor, and the sick; teaching; the dignity of manual labour; the relationship between

the thirty years of our Lord's hidden life, and the three of his active ministry. The Christian ideal of work done to the glory of God.

Again there were lots of questions; some members of the audience were a little sceptical of the use of the mind in approaching the things of God; surely the heart was the important thing? Then came a whole series of questions about the religious orders of the Church. Why didn't religious *work*? How did they spend their time all day?—and all the usual questions which seem to come on this topic. This was a magnificent opportunity; there was real interest in the question, and before long one of the members had suggested that he would like to visit a monastery to see something of the life which was led there. The point was taken up by others, until, to the great delight of the speaker, it was suggested that there would be sufficient interested to make up a 'bus load. The visit was arranged, and, at the time of writing, is due to take place in one week's time; the entire strength of the local C.E.G. is being mustered for the occasion, and a strengthening of friendly relations is certainly anticipated. Only in such an atmosphere can progress in understanding be made.

[A party of thirty-six Non-conformists, 'chaperoned' by eighteen C.E.G. members, visited Hawkesyard Priory on June 20th. They heard a lecture from the editor on 'The Religious Life', were shown round the priory, and attended compline, following the psalms in their Bibles. They had tea and supper at Spode House, our adjacent retreat house, at which they sang their own grace. They stayed till 9.15, entertaining us with songs and hymns sung with great gusto, and we parted the best of friends.—ED.]

Two other addresses to Methodist groups followed the meeting referred to above. The first was on the 'Divinity of Christ'; the second on the internal evidence showing the historical value of St John's gospel.

The divinity talk brought out the points which have so often been evident at outdoor C.E.G. meetings, namely, the importance of defining the meanings of the words we use, and the need for a very clear understanding of the non-Catholic mind on the subject. Patience in dealing with statements such as, 'Co-equal, yes; but not the same in dignity'. Or with the more usual one: 'God, yes, we agree that Jesus Christ was God, but not God in the way that *you* mean'.

Patience was the only way. Trying to get them to forget odd texts, and to see the whole picture which a careful relation of texts alone will show; the Christian tradition for over a thousand years before the reformation. I was made vividly aware of the difficulties confronting the sincere non-Catholic who is genuinely seeking for the truth; for when he is faced with a difficulty, doubt follows upon doubt. This was very clearly illustrated on this occasion, as the members present gradually emphasized their doubts about the historical value of St John's gospel; plainly the only way out of the difficulties brought up in their minds by the Catholic doctrine was to doubt the accuracy of St John's record. Along these lines, the discussion continued until nearly ten o'clock, when even Methodist audiences begin to look thirsty, and it was agreed to adjourn the discussion until the following week.

The minutes which preceded the next week's talk were classic, from a Catholic point of view, for there, point by point, a very able secretary had established every item in the Catholic exposition; the points had certainly been understood, and this, at least, was heartening. Strangely enough, discussion was slow and difficult, and the chairman gladly agreed to the speaker's suggestion that he should give reasons, from the internal evidence of St John's gospel, for accepting it as historically accurate, as well as inspired. The treatment followed the traditional pattern, beginning with references which showed that the writer of the fourth Gospel was (a) a Jew, as evidenced in his familiarity with the Jewish law; (b) that he was a Jew of Palestine, as shown by his intimate knowledge of the detailed Palestinian geography. That he was an eye-witness of the events which he relates; that he was an apostle; finally, that he was John the son of Zebedee.

After this, the discussion flowed freely. It would be foolish to say that the audience was convinced, either about the historicity of St John's Gospel, or about the Catholic teaching on the divinity of Christ, but what can be said with accuracy is that they were *impressed* with the Catholic case. 'We only want the truth', as one member put it. Let us say at least that they realized that there *was* a case. Relations were still good, even though there were differences in belief; on each side there was complete respect for the other's integrity; and most of all they realized the Church had something to offer, and something substantial at that.

That is how the Methodist story stands at this moment. What precisely the future holds is uncertain, but it does hold promise and opportunity. Already the C.E.G. have a booking to address a Methodist meeting in November, a booking made six months in advance, and this a new group.

The guild apparently is 'on the Circuit'.

III

What of other non-Catholic fields? Here again, the accent is on personal contacts through works or office association with non-Catholic friends.

The Anglican meeting was such a case.

It was Church Reunion week; the Anglican vicar in a village just outside the city was determined to do his bit, and invited the members of a neighbouring Methodist church to attend a joint meeting, to be addressed by a speaker from each group. A few days before the appointed date, it was realized that the meeting lacked something, and that the 'something' was a Catholic speaker. One parishioner knew someone, who knew someone else, who knew a Catholic who would speak. The Catholic was a C.E.G. man, and, of course, accepted the invitation with alacrity.

The day of the meeting came, and an assembly of seventy or eighty people—one Catholic in the audience—awaited events. Each speaker was allowed ten minutes to address the audience (the Anglican speaker took half an hour), after which there was a general questions session.

The Anglican speaker was the vicar's wife, and if the reader has in mind the typical caricaturist's version of a vicar's wife, tall, angular, with dated coat, and shapeless hat, then the idea must be corrected, for here was a vicar's wife with a difference. She was young, fashionable, and an able speaker. She had a degree in theology, and appeared to have read every Catholic writer from apostolic times. Her first sentence, which caused her husband the vicar not the slightest embarrassment, almost made the Catholic representative choke. 'I will now state the Anglican position', she began, 'if indeed I can say that we *have* a position.' She then proceeded to trace the Catholic doctrine of the assumption of our Lady, back to the fourth century. (This was her speech on behalf of the Anglican Church.) Evidently she was worried about the development of doctrine; certainly in her comments she was

at pains to be scrupulously fair, and was reading herself, without doubt, eventually, into the Church. Her concluding statement was as interesting as her first. 'In my opinion', she said, 'the Anglican Church, in the next twenty-five years, will cease to exist as a separate institution.' She did not enlighten her audience as to the manner in which this was to be brought about.

The questions followed the usual sort of pattern, most of them directed at the Catholic speaker. The mass; transubstantiation; prayers to our Lady; development of doctrine; Catholics' refusal to take part in non-Catholic services; the validity of orders; was there any salvation outside the Catholic Church; purgatory, and so on.

The meeting after the meeting was even more interesting, for then the real questioners went to work in private conversation, and said that many previous misconceptions had been cleared away in the course of the evening. Another meeting was promised, but so far this has not materialized.

Then there was the Inter-'Varsity Club meeting. Here, there was a Methodist minister, a Salvation Army speaker, and a Catholic, and general questions to follow. Again (and this happens whenever the forum conditions prevail) most of the questions were directed to the Catholic. The accent was naturally on science and philosophy, and all the usual ground was covered. What was the Church's teaching on evolution? How did modern geological opinion fit in with the Church's teaching on Genesis. Was not the Christian idea of God one of subjective projectivism, of building up our own idea of God and then making all the evidence fit the picture? Then came a question which was new, even to the C.E.G.—about the evolution of God!

The chairman for the evening, and a model chairman at that, summed up delightfully by saying: 'I came an agnostic. I go an agnostic. But I go an *enlightened* agnostic.' At least he had a sense of humour.

IV

So much for the C.E.G. speaker in his round of speaking to non-Catholic audiences. What of his activities from within the audience—surely a telling method of spreading interest in Catholic teaching?

The first case to register is that of a debate, under the auspices of the W.E.A., between a professor of the local University College, and a local Methodist minister, on scientific humanism. The parish priest, in whose area the meeting was to be held, asked the evidence guild to attend the meeting—to infiltrate, as he put it—so that the Catholic point of view could be put before the audience.

The infiltration was in the best Communist tradition, in ones and twos, spread well round the room. The experience was novel, and a duty very happily undertaken.

The professor, all unsuspecting, began, in his very first remarks, to attack the Church. Galileo again; and the failure to allow the really brainy type to use his reasoning ability. Then came a more subtle and, to the Catholics present, a new form of attack, namely, that the Christian philosophy based, as the speaker put it, on the reward for good deeds in this life, was based on selfish motives.

Really, it was quite pathetic. The Methodist minister spoke, and said nothing. His main idea was to offend no one. Then the debate was thrown open, and there could be no doubt among those present that there were Catholics among them, and that the Church had a very definite answer to scientific humanism. Galileo was put into proper perspective; the Piltdown skull was thrown in for good measure; and the whole Catholic basis for life, namely, that of doing good, not for sake of reward, but for the sole purpose of expressing our love for God, was put over. From a Catholic point of view, the meeting was a great success. No rough-housing; just the presentation of the truth; a daily job of work for the Catholic layman.

Then there was the meeting of the local Management Association, addressed by the National Director of the Industrial Christian Fellowship. Here again was an ideal opportunity to put the Catholic point of view before a non-Catholic audience, and to correct statements such as this one, that 'The Church was so busy attacking others as to neglect to show her members how the Christian ideal can be applied to modern industrial life'. People who might never have heard of *Rerum Novarum* then had their opportunity—and just another fragment of Catholic teaching was passed on.

V

The evidence guild speaker is a man, or a woman, convinced of the appeal of the doctrines of the Church, and determined to grasp every conceivable opportunity to share with others the treasure which he has found. For this reason, the guildsman has made special efforts during recent years to address Catholic audiences, with a view to giving to other Catholic layfolk the benefit of experiences gained in contact and discussion with non-Catholics. Every Catholic, in the course of his daily life, is asked about his faith. Sometimes the questions are put courteously, sometimes not. The question may be difficult, it may be easy. But a question means an opportunity, and surely it is true that very, very few Catholics are capable of taking the opportunity when it comes. Here the C.E.G. speaker can make a tremendous contribution to the Catholic cause in this country. He has spent many years of his life in studying his faith, and has specialized in the question and answer technique; from experience he knows the type of question which will occur most often, and can indicate the approach in answering which has been found to be most successful.

The guildsman must train his fellow Catholic, and so, through others, extend his work.

For this reason, we have spent much time in speaking to other societies. For instance, to the Grail on vocation in work, coupled with the need for the young Catholic worker to be armed with a knowledge as well as a love for his faith; to the same society, a talk on Christian marriage from an experienced woman speaker.

Talks to the Knights of St Columba, with a view to marshalling Catholic men as daily apostles of the truth; to the C.Y.M.S.—indicating the outlook of non-Catholic groups, and the Catholic approach to difficulties with different types. Creating *interest* in studying the faith; showing indeed that the layman can and should play his part in bringing about the eventual conversion of England.

Talks to the Catholic Women's League, with the idea of helping women and mothers to answer questions on their faith from the adolescents in the home. Talks to the Newman Association, and to the Catenians, so that professional men, too, shall be reminded of the contribution which they also can be making.

And, supremely, talks and guild presentation and answers, in the new type of guild meeting, the parish forum. Here a great new field of activity has been revealed. The normal arrangement is for the guild to hire a parish hall, and, with the co-operation of the parish priest, to publicize the meeting. Catholic societies in the neighbourhood are circulated, an advertisement inserted in the press where possible, and non-Catholics are invited to come along with their Catholic friends.

Two or three very short talks are given, on widely varying topics; for instance, in one forum, the talks might be on marriage, on 'Why I am a Catholic', and the mass. Then questions on these subjects are invited, followed by questions on any other point of Catholic doctrine.

These meetings have proved to be immensely popular, with attendance varying from twenty or thirty to two hundred, according to the parish. Once Catholics have seen the question-and-answer technique in operation, they have proved to be more interested in doing something about learning the answer for themselves. For the very interested, attendance at the guild's indoor training sessions is encouraged; for the others, encouragement to read appropriate literature and to attend a subsequent forum is the usual approach.

Once the idea of studying the faith has registered, there is no limit to the subject-matter which can be put over. At a medieval disputation, run in conjunction with such a series, the attendance was in the order of ninety people. This, surely, is a tribute to the desire of Catholics to 'do something about it' once the lead is given; but even the lead is not sufficient, for very few Catholics are capable of lone study. They need help, and encouragement, and the benefit of group learning and discussion; this gives confidence, and hastens the useful application of the individual's contribution to society.

The evidence guild forum is a great parish weapon, and many priests have come to recognize its value.

VI

Now we are back to our speaker again: the speaker in his private circle of friends. Strangely enough, many of his friends will be non-Catholics, for their company fascinates him. Rest assured that, wherever he may be, his guild work continues: not

in the sense that he rams Catholic teaching down everyone's throat, but that he is ready, quietly and confidently, always to give an account of the faith that is in him to those who ask.



ST AUGUSTINE'S GEOGRAPHY OF CONVERSION

EDMUND HILL, O.P.

I SUPPOSE the thing that strikes one most forcibly about St Augustine's *Confessions* is the astonishing power of introspection which they reveal. Rarely can there have been a man aware of himself and his experience with such ruthless clarity. The result is that all Augustine's theological thought is an experience-theology. It is never abstract, uncommitted, or impersonal. But this is not to say that his mind remained enclosed in his own personal world. He was not only a person of unusual self-awareness, he was also, if we can so put it, an unusually public person. Because he could look at himself so shrewdly and objectively, he was able to develop his experience into ideas of universal validity. It is with such a development of his experience of conversion that we are here concerned; not with the personal voyage of discovery described in the *Confessions*, but with the geographical charts which came of that voyage, and which he unfolds in his *De Trinitate*.

First of all a word of explanation about why conversion should come into a book on the Trinity. The *De Trinitate* is not a scientific theological treatise on the mystery of the Trinity; it is a quest, an attempt to discover the three divine Persons almost as Columbus discovered America. In the first seven books Augustine investigates the *data* of scripture and tradition for the doctrine; in the last eight he sets out to discover the reality of the Trinity through the image of the Trinity which is man, man *secundum mentem*, in his highest or spiritual part. Simply as an intellectual exercise the effort is doomed to failure, and Augustine explains why in the last book. We may take it that he realized this before he began. It is only in the next life that we will be able to *see* the divine Persons, that faith will give way to the vision of perfect understanding. Before we can fully discover God, we must cross the Atlantic ocean of death. But the point is that for Augustine the effort to

find God through the image of our mind is not simply an intellectual exercise. It is an exercise in realizing the image itself, in unfolding ourselves into a more and more perfect, more vital likeness of the threefold divine exemplar. It is in fact an exercise in progressive and continual conversion. Man is made in the image and likeness of God. The image is distorted and the likeness blurred by sin. In Christ we are provided, so to speak, with the matrix for restoring the likeness and remaking the image.

The background then to Augustine's idea of conversion is his idea of aversion, or sin. In stating it the picture he has in mind is always of the architypal sin, the fall, and superimposed on it, re-enacting it, his own experience as described in the *Confessions*. Here are two passages in which the picture is vividly drawn. In the first he is discussing the meaning of the maxim 'Know thyself', which is an exercise that plays a crucial part in the realization of the divine image.

De Trinitate X, 7.

Why is the mind commanded to know itself? In my opinion it means that it should think about itself, and live according to its nature; that is, it should want to be set in its natural place and order, *under* him it ought to be subject to, and *over* things it ought to be in charge of; *under* him it should be governed by and *over* things it should be governing. In fact, however, its desires are bent and twisted, and so it does many things, as though it had forgotten its true self, as follows. It sees certain inward beauties of that more sublime nature which is God; and while it ought to stand still and enjoy them, it wants to attribute them to itself. It wants to be independently what he is, and is not content with being dependently like him, and so it turns away from him and starts shifting and slipping away into less and less which it imagines to be more and more. It is, after all, not sufficient for itself, nor does anything else suffice it once it departs from him who alone can suffice it. And so in its poverty and distress it becomes excessively intent on its own actions and the unquiet pleasures it gets through them; in this way it becomes greedy to acquire experiences from things outside itself, the sort of things it loves when it gets to know them, and which it realizes it may lose unless it takes anxious care to hold on to them. The result is that it loses its sense of security, and

takes ever less trouble to think about itself the more assured it is that it cannot lose itself. That it does not think about itself does not mean, of course, that it ceases to know itself . . .; and yet such is the power of love, that when it has spent a long time thinking lovingly about these exterior things and has glued itself on to them with its anxious care, it draws them back with it even when it is returning in some way or other to thinking about itself. And because the things outside, which it has fallen in love with through the senses and wrapped itself up in by long familiarity, are material bodies and cannot therefore be brought into the region, so to say, of its own immaterial nature, it rolls itself up in their images, and clutches on to what it has made out of itself inside itself.

In this passage Augustine is chiefly concerned with what might be called an intellectual fall into ignorance, but he makes it clear that it all starts in a morally vicious intellectual pride. The following extract also occurs in a long discussion of *scientia* (which is systematically contrasted with *sapientia*, wisdom, and might be translated, perhaps, as *savoir-faire*, a quality which unlike wisdom can be used well or ill). But the moral obliquity and the shameful consequences of the proud grasping at this sort of knowledge are more vehemently stressed.

De Trinitate XII, 14 & 16.

The soul, loving its own power, slides away from the whole which is common to all into the part which is its own private property. By following God's directions and being perfectly governed by his laws, it could enjoy the whole universe of creation; but by the apostasy of pride, which is called the beginning of sin (Eccli. x, 15), it strives to grab something more than the whole and to govern it by its own laws; and because there is nothing more than the whole, it is thrust back into anxiety over a part, and so by being greedy for more it gets less. That is why greed is called the root of all evils (1 Tim. vi, 10). Thus all that it tries to do on its own against the laws of the universe, it does by its own body, which is the only part it has a part-ownership in. And so it finds delight in bodily shapes and movements, and because it cannot take them inside, it wraps itself in their images which it has fixed in the memory. In this way it defiles itself foully with a fanciful sort of fornication,

prostituting the imagination by referring all its activities to one or more of three ends; curiosity, searching for material and temporal experience through the senses; swollen conceit, affecting to be above other souls which are given over to their senses; or carnal pleasures, plunging itself in that muddy whirlpool. . . .

But it would not slide down to such ugly and wretched prostitution straight away from the beginning. For just as a serpent does not walk with open strides, but wriggles along by the tiny little movements of its scales; so the careless glide little by little along the slippery path of failure, and beginning from a distorted appetite for being like God, they end up by becoming like beasts. So it is that stripped naked of their first robe,¹ they earned the skin garments of mortality (cf. Gen. iii, 7, 21). For man's true honour is God's image and likeness in him, but this can only be preserved when directed towards him from whom its impression is received. And so the less love he has for what is his very own, the more tightly he will be able to stick to God. But out of greed to know his own power by experience he tumbled down, by some sort of downward drag of his own, into himself as though down to the middle level. And then, while he wants to be, like God, under nobody, he is thrust down as a punishment from his own half-way level to the bottom, down to the material things in which the beasts find their pleasure. And so since his honour consists in being like God and his disgrace in being like a beast, the 48th psalm says, 'Man, established in honour, did not understand; he was matched with senseless animals, and became like them'.

How could he travel this long way from the heights to the depths, except through the half-way level of self? If you neglect to hold dear in charity the wisdom which always remains the same, and hanker after knowledge (*savoir-faire*) through experience of changeable, temporal things, this knowledge swells you out instead of building you up (cf. 1 Cor. viii, 1). In this way the mind is overweighted with a sort of self-heaviness, and is therefore heaved out of the state of happiness, and by that experience of its half-way-ness it learns to its punishment what a difference there is between the good it has forsaken and the

1 The robe of grace, the *stola prima* in which the prodigal was clothed on his return to his father.

evil it has committed; nor can it go back up again, having squandered and lost its strength, except by the grace of its Maker calling it to repentance and forgiving it its sins. For who will ever free his hapless soul from the body of this death, except by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord (cf. Rom. vii, 24)?

The picture of the effect of sin presented by these passages is of the collapse of an original harmonious order. Order, for Augustine, is not the static pattern which the word tends to suggest in English, but a rhythmical balance, or direction, of energies. In the original order of creation the mind controlled the lower forces of the material world in virtue of its own subordination to and direction towards the divine control. Pride rejects this subordination, the mind wants to be directed only on itself, to set itself at the top and the centre of the whole system. But the effect produced by this *aversion* away from God to self is the exact opposite to that intended; instead of rising *higher* and concentrating its forces more deeply *inwards*, the mind falls *downwards*, and collapses, scatters its forces, *outwards*. I underline the spatial words, because they provide the imaginative framework for Augustine's idea. The master sins involved are pride and greed. They have succeeded, one might say, in turning the image inside out and upside down.

Such being the chaotic deployment or explosion of forces active in and produced by aversion, we can see that the re-organizing, re-ordering work of conversion must proceed in the opposite direction; instead of pride and greed gliding downwards and outwards, we must have humility and charity working inwards and upwards; inwards away from things to self, and upwards through self to God. But this work of conversion, of re-integrating the image, is impossible without the grace of the mediator. It is essentially a divine work, the work of justification and sanctification.

Augustine's insistence on this absolute priority of grace is perhaps the most Augustinian thing about him. But we are entitled to ask why it should be so, in the framework of his own description of sin and the fall. When the sinner has realized that he has taken a wrong turning, and hard experience will soon teach him this, why cannot he simply turn round and retrace his steps? If you put your shirt on inside out, all you have to do is take

it off and put it on again the right way. The first reason why such a course is impossible in this case is what we might call the self-generating nature of pride. The mind can start off by itself on the return journey, it can proceed, if it is of sufficient calibre, on the first stage inwards from things to self, even on the second stage, as a purely intellectual exercise, from self to God. But this is an achievement calculated of its very nature to puff up the mind with pride, to give it an inescapable feeling of its own superiority. This is the classic way of pagan philosophy, and even if the philosophers have philosophized correctly, as Augustine held (at least at the beginning of his Christian career) that a man like Plotinus had, their occupational vice is pride. In this context he is constantly quoting Romans i, 18-23.²

As a matter of fact Augustine became increasingly sceptical about the ability of even the best philosophers to discover anything like the fulness of divine truth. In any case the task of tracing a route back to God through the ruins of ignorance caused by the fall would be impossible for the majority, unless that route were illuminated by the divine light of faith. The following passage concludes a long discussion of men's universal desire for happiness, in which he has argued that from any point of view, whatever you may think true happiness consists in, life cannot be truly happy unless it is everlasting.

De Trinitate XIII, 12.

Whether human nature is capable of this everlasting life, which it nonetheless admits to be so desirable, is no small question. But if the faith possessed by those to whom Jesus gave the power of becoming sons of God is at hand, there is no question at all. Extremely few who have tried to solve the matter by human arguments, though endowed with every advantage, have been able to reach any conclusion about even the soul's immortality. [And their ideas about immortality and happiness or beatitude have been highly uncertain, not to say contradictory. They are fully discussed in the twelfth book of the *City of God*.] But faith promises on the strength of divine authority, not of human argument, that the whole man, consisting of course both of soul and body, is going to be immortal and therefore truly happy. And so after the gospel

² See below, p. 99f.

had said that Jesus gave 'those who received him the power of becoming sons of God', and had explained what receiving him meant by saying 'those who believe in his name', and how they become the sons of God by adding 'who were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God'; after this, in case the human weakness which we see and carry around with us should make us despair of attaining such eminence, he goes on directly, 'and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us' (John i, 12-14). The purpose was to convince us of what might seem unbelievable by showing us its opposite. For surely, if the Son of God by nature became the son of man by mercy for the sake of the sons of men—that is the meaning of 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us men'; how much easier is it to believe that the sons of man by nature become the sons of God by God's grace, and dwell in God in whom alone and from whom alone they can enjoy happiness by sharing his immortality? It was to convince us of this that the Son of God came to share in our mortality.

This passage will have suggested a much more fundamental reason why the sinner cannot simply convert himself, or the mind restore itself to the pristine perfection of its imaging God. It is that the order which has been disrupted by the fall is an order of personal relationships. It is only in virtue of a personal bond between him and his Maker that man can be said to be in the image of God. It is a personal friendship that sin has broken, and while it may perhaps be questioned whether it takes two to make a quarrel, it undoubtedly takes two to make a quarrel up. In the following passage Augustine concludes a long exposition of the congruity and fittingness of the reconciliation offered us by God in Christ. The divine initiative in making up the quarrel has taken the form of a condescension, in the true and inoffensive meaning of that word. The Son of God came down, or was sent out to where we had fallen down and been scattered out, in order to guide us back on the conversion route of inwards and upwards from the senses and imagination, through *scientia* or *savoir-faire* to the contemplation of divine and eternal things which is wisdom. And so faith in the incarnation and redemption, which were events occurring in the world of space and time, belong to the practical side of the mind, to its *savoir-faire*, and their objects are presented to it imaginatively in the gospel, in order to redirect

all these lower functions of the mind to its sublimest function of wisdom or the contemplation of divine things, and thus turn the image the right way up again.

De Trinitate XIII, 21 & 24.

And so why, after all, should Christ not have died? Why indeed should the Almighty not have set aside all the other countless ways in which he could have delivered us, and chosen this way above all, in which his divinity suffered no change or diminution, and the humanity he took upon himself conferred such an immense benefit upon men? The eternal Son of God being also the son of man paid the debt he did not owe of temporal death, to deliver them from the debt they did owe of eternal death. The devil was holding on to our sins, and using them to keep us fixed deservedly in death. He who had none of his own let us off our sins, and was brought by the devil undeservedly to death. Such has been the power and value of that blood, that he who exacted from Christ even for that short time a death he did not owe, thereby lost the right to hold any who had put on Christ in the eternal death they did owe. So 'God commends his charity to us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being justified now in his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath through him' (Rom. v, 8ff). Justified, he says, in his blood; justified, clearly, in being delivered from all our sins; and delivered from all our sins, because the Son of God, who had none, was slain for us. And so we shall be saved from the wrath through him—from God's wrath, of course, which is nothing else but justly inflicted punishment. If then justly inflicted divine punishment has been given such a name as wrath, what else can reconciliation with God mean but the end of this wrath? Indeed we were only God's enemies in the sense that sins are the enemies of justice, and so when the sins are forgiven hostilities come to an end, and those whom the Just One justifies are reconciled to him. But of course he loved them even as enemies, seeing that 'he did not spare his own Son, but surrendered him for us all' (Rom. viii, 32), when we were still enemies. So the apostle continues, quite logically, 'For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son'—by which the forgiveness of our sins was achieved—'much more surely,

now that we have been reconciled, shall we be saved in his life' (ib., v, 10). Safe in life, because reconciled by death. Who could doubt that he is going to give his life to his friends, for whom he gave his death while they were enemies? . . .

All these things that the Word become flesh did and endured for us in space and time, belong, according to the distinction I have been trying to establish, to knowledge (*savoir-faire*) and not to wisdom. But that the Word is, outside time and beyond place, that he is co-eternal with the Father and present everywhere, if any one manages to speak at all about that, it will be 'the utterance of wisdom' (1 Cor. xii, 8). Thus the Word become flesh, which is what Christ Jesus is, has treasures both of wisdom and knowledge, as St Paul says when writing to the Colossians (Col. ii, 3) . . . I take the difference between these two to be this, that wisdom concerns divine things, knowledge human things, and every believer will be with me in acknowledging each of them in Christ. And when I read that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, in the Word I understand the true Son of God, and in the flesh I recognize the true son of man, both of them joined together by an unimaginable profusion of grace into one person of God and man. So it goes on, 'And we saw his glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, the fulness of grace and truth' (John i, 14). I think we can refer grace to knowledge and truth to wisdom, without any inconsistency. Among things that have arisen in time, the joining of a man to God in one person is the supreme grace; and among eternal things the supreme truth is rightly attributed to the Word of God. It is by faith in what he did for us in space and time that we are purified in order to be able to contemplate him reliably in his eternal realities. The greatest pagan philosophers were able to gaze upon the invisible things of God, which they divined through the things that have been made; but because they philosophized without a mediator, that is without the man Christ Jesus, neither believing the prophets who said he would come, nor the apostles who said he had, 'they held down the truth', as is said of them, 'in iniquity' (Rom. i, 18). Here they were on this lowest, material, level of creation; they were bound to look for some middle stage, something to mediate their transfer to those highest, spiritual things they had understood. And so they fell into the deceitful toils of demons,

who induced them to change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and birds, and animals, and reptiles (*ibid.* 23). Such were the forms of the idols they set up and worshipped. But our knowledge [that is our means of transferring from the lowest to the highest] is Christ, and our wisdom also is the same Christ. It is he who sows in us faith about temporal things, and he who shows us the truth about eternal things. Through him we go to him, through knowledge we wend our way to wisdom. But in this process we never depart from one and the same Christ, 'in whom all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden'.

The incarnation of the Word, and the death of the Word become flesh, provide for Augustine the classic example of humility. So by accepting Christ on this lowest material level of creation in which he came to us, and clinging to him as our guide back inwards and upwards to God, we are saved from the self-stultifying, vicious circle of pride. For a man of Augustine's intellectual power there can be few things so humbling as having to make an act of faith, to take on trust what you cannot see or understand. It is by faith alone that we can grasp the mediator, the guide back to vision and understanding, the Word incarnate. The first step of aversion was a sin of intellectual pride; the first step of conversion must be one of intellectual humility, which is faith.

But it is only the first step. The image is not restored to its ultimate degree of perfection in the twinkling of an eye. By faith we remember, in some strange way, the God we had forgotten; we remember him when we meet him in Christ. That encounter may take place in a moment; at least there must always be a definitive moment when God is acknowledged as recognized and remembered. This moment is, so to speak, caught sacramentally in baptism. But then we have to get to know God better and better in Christ; faith has to strive towards understanding, memory has to give birth slowly to comprehension, the whole process being powered by charity; faith working through love. So conversion is a lifelong process; a growing, Augustine would say, through knowledge into wisdom. It is indeed an adventure which calls for the continual play of intelligence, but it is not a purely intellectual pursuit, because the object of our knowledge and our wisdom is a person. What we are being invited to is an

ever closer intimacy with God through Jesus Christ, which cannot be undertaken without constant readiness of will and liveliness of mind. On this subject let Augustine have the last word.

De Trinitate XIV, 22 & 23.

Those who have remembered and turn to the Lord (Ps. xxi, 28) from the deformity which had conformed them by worldly lusts to this world, pay attention to the apostle, who says, 'Do not be conformed to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your minds' (Rom. xii, 2); and thus the image begins to be reformed by him who formed it in the first place. It cannot reform itself, as it was able to deform itself. Elsewhere he says, 'Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new man, who was created according to God in justice and the holiness of truth' (Eph. iv, 23). 'Created according to God' means the same as 'in the image of God'. But by sinning he lost justice and the holiness of truth, and thus this image became deformed and shabby; he gets those qualities back again when he is reformed and renovated. . . .

Certainly this renovation does not happen in one moment of conversion, as the baptismal renovation by the forgiveness of all sins happens in a moment, so that not even one tiny sin remains unforgiven. But it is one thing to throw off a fever, another to recover from the weakness which the fever leaves behind it; it is one thing to remove a bullet from the body, another to heal the wound it made with a complete cure. The first stage of the cure is to remove the cause of debility, and this is done by pardoning all sins; the second stage is curing the debility itself, and this is done gradually by making steady progress in the renovation of the image. These two stages are referred to in the psalm, which says, 'He is gracious to all your iniquities'—which happens in baptism—'and heals all your infirmities' (Ps. cii, 3)—which happens by daily advances, in which the image is renewed. About this the apostle speaks quite explicitly: 'Even if our outer man is being corrupted, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day' (2 Cor. iv, 16). So then the man who is being renewed in justice and the holiness of truth, making progress day by day, is transferring his love from temporal things to eternal, from visible to intelligible, from carnal to spiritual things; he is practising himself in

checking and lessening his greed for the one sort, and in binding himself with charity to the other. In this his success depends on divine help; it is God who declares, 'Without me you can do nothing' (John xv, 5). When the last day of his life overtakes someone, who has kept faith in the mediator, making this sort of progress, he will be received by the holy angels to be presented to the God he has worshipped and to be perfected by him, and so to receive his body again incorruptible at the end of the world. For only when it comes to the perfect vision of God will this image bear God's perfect likeness.



THE CONVERSION OF CHARLES DE FOUCAULD

JEAN-FR SIX

IN a jotting he made in 1821 J. H. Newman wrote: 'I speak of conversion with great diffidence, being obliged to adopt the language of books. For my feelings, as far as I remember, were so different from any account I have ever read, that I dare not go by what may be an individual case.'

The abbé Huvelin, who was to be God's principal instrument in the conversion of Charles de Foucauld, felt the same difficulty. 'The story of a conversion', he wrote, 'even of one's own, is something that can never be fully understood. You can see the stages that have led up to it, but that is all. Our Lord acts in such a variety of ways.' In this article we will sketch the story of such stages, and investigate as delicately as possible their convergence on the focal-point which constitutes de Foucauld's conversion.

In February 1886 Charles de Foucauld was living in a flat in Paris not far from St Augustine's. He was twenty-eight years old, a man at the height of his powers, and had just completed an exploration of Morocco, which he had conducted with outstanding insight and perseverance. This proud and stoical feat of will-power restored him to the good opinion of his family, which had hitherto looked with decided disapproval on the gay and disreputable life he had been leading.

In Morocco Charles de Foucauld had come across Islam. What struck him most forcibly about it was its profound and characteristic sense of God's greatness. It was this that summoned him to

break free from the round of human futilities he had been caught in, and to find order and harmony of soul in higher things. 'Islam has shaken me to the core. The sight of this faith, of these souls living continually in the presence of God has given me a glimpse of something greater and finer than the preoccupations of this world: *Ad majora nati sumus.*' He met men to whom God meant more than anything else. He had seen Arabs prostrating themselves in prayer, and had recognized the hold God had over them. He had studied Arabic in the Qur'an, and read the teaching of the Prophet, that God is the Only One, and that everything else is subject to him, nothing escapes him, he alone has the right to be worshipped.

He began to grasp the truth that God alone matters, and that man's life is really very simple—to devote yourself utterly to the Most High. Allah akbar. The unconditional gift of oneself to God will thus give a simple unity to life. So it was that the discovery of Islam was the first distant stage of his journey to conversion.

But while recognizing the element of truth to be found in this religion, Charles de Foucauld had the shrewdness to decide that Islam could not be the true religion. It failed to be consistent with itself, or to live up to the truths it professed; indeed it even restricted their application. 'I began to see clearly', he wrote to Henry de Castries, 'that Islam was not built on a divine foundation, and that it was not there the truth was to be found.' Why not? 'Because the essence of love, of worship, is to lose oneself, plunge oneself, in the beloved, and to count everything else as nothing. Islam does not show sufficient contempt for creatures to enable it to teach a love of God that is worthy of God. Without chastity and poverty, love and worship remain very defective. When you love passionately, you cut yourself off from anything that might distract you even for a moment from the beloved, you throw yourself, you lose yourself utterly in him.'

God then proceeded to the next stage of his preparation, the purification of the heart. De Foucauld had somehow been obliged by circumstances to lead a chaste life, but he had soon felt a positive desire to continue it. 'Chastity led me back to my family at the end of the winter of 1885-6, and soon grew to be a delight and a need I could not do without.' This shows how far beyond Islam he had moved. That religion not only did not require chastity, but hardly seemed to value it at all. And yet the puri-

fication effected in de Foucauld by the sense of God's greatness he had imbibed from the Qur'an and from contact with Moslems, now developed quite simply and precisely into a way of life which would have been inconceivable in Islam—and all this before his conversion. Providential indeed was this stage of deliberate chastity. 'It was necessary in order to prepare my soul for the truth. The devil has too much control over a soul that is not chaste to allow truth to enter.'

He was living at this time in close contact with his family. God made great use of family influence in effecting his conversion; above all of his cousin's, Mme de Bondy, who was eight years his senior, and had looked after him like a mother when he had been left an orphan. In this spring of 1886 Charles de Foucauld was still bent on practising a strict morality by purely human efforts—a morality without God. He had 'a taste for virtue, pagan virtue'. His thinking was still obsessed by the ideals of Stoic asceticism. He seemed unable to get any further than an agnosticism which despaired of ever reaching the truth and of telling which religion is the true one. It was at this point that Mme de Bondy proved such a help. She was a remarkable woman, virtuous, kind, discreet; she was to be God's agent in helping Charles de Foucauld bridge the gap between notions of abstract truth and the faith. It was the beauty of her soul which 'drew him to the truth', as he said himself; 'When I see how intelligent that soul is, I am forced to admit that the religion which she believes in cannot be as stupid as I thought'. He was later to say that Mme de Bondy 'was God's assistant', but 'in virtue of her silence, her kindness, her goodness, her perfection'; 'she simply let herself be seen, being good, exercising her attraction, but not taking any action'. The essence of Mme de Bondy's influence on her cousin was quite simply her silent presence.

In this she was only applying the principles and methods of apostolic work advocated by her director, the abbé Huvelin, who used to say, 'When you want to convert a person, it is no use preaching at him; it is much better to show that you love him than to present him with a sermon'.

Such influences as these are no more than preparatory; they do not, of themselves, bring a knowledge of God. Charles de Foucauld, thus worked over by grace, is simply better disposed to receive him; he is still unaware of him as a living reality. 'Despite

all the graces I had received, I still did not know you. You were constantly at work in me and on me. How extraordinary was the speed and energy of your transforming power, and still I was quite unaware of you! At the beginning of October 1886, after living with my family for six months, I esteemed and desired virtue, but I did not know you.'

Our evidence for the last stages leading up to his conversion and for the conversion itself comes from de Foucauld's own pen. He has left us two accounts of his return to God which are very different in character. One is a meditation, the other a letter. The meditation is taken from some notes of a retreat he made at Nazareth from November 5th to 15th, 1897. In it the hermit draws a general picture, in the presence of 'his beloved Jesus', of the stages of his conversion, of his past life and of the mercy of God. The letter, dated August 14th, 1901, is written to his friend Henry de Castries, whose faith had become very insecure. They had not been in touch for fifteen years, and de Foucauld breaks the silence with this account of how he had rediscovered the faith. This letter is written in a concise narrative style, and makes a rapid survey of what had actually happened. The meditation on the other hand does not cover this ground. It harps instead on the solemn theme of God's mercy; on this theme it plays with a slow and majestic splendour. The two accounts are complementary to each other, and together they present us with a strong, clear picture of de Foucauld's conversion.

In the course of October 1886 Charles de Foucauld was beginning to feel a great hunger for God, and an urgent need to speak to him. He started visiting churches and spending long hours in prayer, at the same time experiencing a great weariness. 'Your first grace to me', he wrote, 'was this feeling of starvation. It is here that I see the dawn of my conversion, when I haltingly, timidly, started my journey back to you, making you this strange prayer, "If you exist, make me know you".' From now on God is no longer for Charles de Foucauld just a truth to be learned, he is a person to be met, one who can grant or withhold the knowledge of himself. This transition from 'What is this?' to 'Who art thou?' is vitally important, and this appeal to a 'Thou' implies a recognition that the Other is the Wholly Other, that he is the Almighty, especially as regards the revelation he can make of who he is.

This prayer is not of itself the whole conversion. The intellect is on the defensive, and must make the next step; Charles de Foucauld has been asking himself if the truth he is looking for might not after all be found in the Catholic religion, and he decides to test this hypothesis. So he starts to look round for a good 'professor of the Catholic religion', a *thaleb*,¹ or master, who could instruct him in religion, just as he had once asked for a 'thaleb in Arabic' before his explorations in Morocco.

Whom should he choose? At first he was inclined to the indirect approach, to attend a course of lectures rather than take private instruction from a priest. He had heard of the well attended conferences that the abbé Huvelin gave in the crypt at St Augustine's, and he decided to go to them. And so when Marie de Bondy mentioned at table one day that the abbé Huvelin was ill and would not be giving his conferences that year, and added how disappointed she was, her cousin replied 'So am I, I was counting on going to them'. A few days later he confided to her, 'You are lucky to believe; I look for the light and cannot find it'.

We are well informed about the events on that morning of October 29th or 30th. Charles de Foucauld went into the church to look for the abbé Huvelin, and found him in the confessional. He went up and began to explain that he did not want to make his confession, but would like some 'lessons in religion'. 'There and then', he tells us, 'he made me get down on my knees and make my confession.' Immediately after, at his confessor's command, he went to the altar of our Lady to make his communion.

The abbé's method may seem rather surprising. A man who tells him that he has not got the faith is promptly and firmly ordered to make his confession. But can the curate of St Augustine's have been quite uninformed about the crisis de Foucauld was going through? He must have seen him spending those long hours in church; he would have read on his face the marks of the painful inner conflict he was enduring. And then Mme de Bondy was his spiritual daughter; she must often have spoken to him about her cousin. The really astonishing thing was the abbé's gift of insight into souls, to which many of his contemporaries bore witness. He could tell the precise situation of this soul, who was putting off the final step because his mind was still paralysed with agnosticism. He must above all move the will. Would

1 A catechist who expounds the Qur'an.

learned discussions have succeeded in disengaging this intelligent man from the relativism that had bound his thought for the last ten years? Only determined and definite action could steady him and win his assent. The abbé's remedy perfectly suited the complicated tangle Charles de Foucauld found himself in, and the patient responded to it with that remarkable quality he had of making a clean break with the past.

An abrupt conversion indeed. Everything suddenly changed. God became a living person to him, at once so infinitely beyond him and so very near. Grace seems to have struck him with the speed of lightning. There is a touch of grandeur about this total, unconditional, conversion. Charles de Foucauld recognizes that God is all-powerful, and therefore can effect a total transformation in him. 'In making me enter that confessional, you gave me everything.' The recipient of such a total gift from God must respond in a total way; it is without any reservations at all that he wants to give back his whole life to God. From the moment of his conversion Charles de Foucauld recognized the hold of the transcendent God on every aspect of his life, and all he wanted was to make a complete sacrificial offering of himself in return.

Less than a year before he had written to Gabriel Tourdes, a friend of his, 'Definitive, you know how that word is to be understood. You and I are far too philosophical to suppose that there is anything definitive in this world.' And here he was, ready to make God the absolute gift of himself, and in that very act to detach himself from all created things. His first principle now is that God's greatness requires from man a total oblation of himself, to the very limit of obedience. His is an extraordinarily unyielding faith, utterly consistent with itself. De Foucauld's basic pride and his will to power have been transformed into an unlimited ardour for humility, abasement, poverty. A passage he wrote at Pentecost 1897 is very revealing on this gesture of humility which was the essence of his conversion. 'Faith is incompatible with pride, vainglory, human respect and affection. To believe you must humble yourself'; and he goes on, 'Faith points us to perfection by imitating a God who was abject in his hidden life, and in his public life was persecuted, slandered, jeered at, suspected, and condemned'.

The basic pressure which moved this man was the ceaseless thrust of a faith driving him to give himself more and more to

the Absolute, and to reduce his own stature before him. For the rest of his life Charles de Foucauld was always looking for ways of doing God's will better, adoring him better, humbling himself better. It must not be forgotten that it was given him in his conversion to meet the Lord Jesus intimately in the eucharist. The side of our Lord's life which appealed to him most was his lowliness, his poverty. He, of whose sacrifice he partook after his confession, is Jesus the poor infant of Bethlehem, the stranger from Nazareth, the despised man of Calvary, the one who had willingly given himself to the end. Charles de Foucauld's one desire was to imitate Jesus more and more, with him to empty himself more and more. On the day of his death he wrote, 'Our self-emptying is the most powerful means we have of becoming one with Jesus, and doing some good for souls'.

All this may seem rather discouraging to people who admire Charles de Foucauld, but find themselves incapable of following him. The response of this convert to God's call certainly had something heroic about it. But we should remember that de Foucauld's gift of his life to God, for all its kingly generosity, was also thoroughly simple. His sacrifice was accomplished in the humdrum activities of daily life, in ordinary things—a confession, a communion, a church like any other, a parish curate, a week-day, nothing very unusual on the surface. His all-embracing sacrifice was made in a secret hidden way. In a very real sense the poverty and humility which he offered to God were perfectly in keeping with that acute perception he had of God's transcendence. It is in his awareness of his insignificance before God that he can also be aware of the only gift he can really make to God, the gift of himself. Because he is feeble and weak, the only thing to do is to offer himself to God with complete simplicity of heart.



CONTEMPLATION AND CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

JAMES HARRISON, O.P.

BY contemplation here I am not referring to any merely natural operation of the intellect, however sublime it may be, but to an operation much more elusive, namely, supernatural contemplation, called also mysticism. It may be

defined as *an immediate or experimental knowledge of God*. Our ordinary knowledge of God, of his existence and of his nature, comes to us not immediately but only mediately, that is through intellectual concepts or ideas in the mind derived from reason and faith. By our natural reason it is possible to know of God's existence and to some extent his attributes, but only by faith can we know his inner nature, for example, his threefold personality. But mysticism, or mystical knowledge of God which is supernatural contemplation, is something quite different. This is immediate knowledge of God and experience of his presence through union with him by charity. It is knowledge obtained through the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the soul made connatural by the infused gift of wisdom—the highest possible knowledge obtainable in this life of God himself, the cause of which is in the will, but its essence is in the intellect. Such knowledge is therefore entirely above our natural knowledge; it is completely supernatural. No one by the mere use of his natural powers, even with the assistance of ordinary grace, actual or habitual, can attain to this knowledge, arrive at such a state of contemplation. Though this is impossible to man's own powers, nevertheless we cannot place limits to God's power, nor to his will. Consequently it would be no doubt possible for non-Catholics, or even non-Christians, to have such mystical knowledge; but if they do, it can only be by the gratuitous power and will of God. It would be God's free gift and would not be natural but supernatural. On the other hand, it is also possible for one to be heroically virtuous, that is to be a saint, and yet not to be gifted with any mystical experience, not to attain to this supernatural contemplation of God. However, though a saint may in fact not be a mystic, nevertheless it would seem to be impossible for one to be a mystic without being a saint. This being so, the mystic whoever he may be, cannot be truly said to have *discovered* God; indeed such knowledge of God cannot even be *sought*; that is cannot be sought *directly*, and by one's own efforts. Indirectly of course it can be, namely by preparing one's soul for it, and even in desiring and praying that God might give it to one, if that should be his will. To the true mystic God makes himself known 'experimentally', the person so favoured contributes nothing, at any rate directly, to this result. God takes possession of certain mental powers (intellect and will), and focuses them upon

himself, and those other powers, which from their nature cannot be so focused, are left idle. There are no conditions by the fulfilment of which mystical experience may be ensured. The mystic is the mere recipient of the favours bestowed on him. Now if and when he receives such favours he is quite certain in his own mind of the divine communication, though he cannot prove it; and his conviction that the communication is indeed divine (that is, from God himself) is unshakeable. Nevertheless this subjective certitude cannot be taken as a proof that the experience is a genuine mystical one. Such a person, for example, may be subjectively certain, and yet this may be due to nervous excitement, hysteria, memory association, or disease. Therefore there can be no mystical experience without certitude in the mind, yet this certitude is no guarantee of its genuineness. To repeat, then, the essence of mysticism is direct contact with a transcendental reality, that is, God himself; and this from its nature, is incapable of being described in the terms of ordinary sense-experience to which human language is necessarily limited. Thus the consciousness, however certain, of the actual divine presence admits of no adequate description. Hence the so-called relations and attempted descriptions of mystical experience by saints or mystics or ordinary theologians are necessarily quite inadequate, to say the least. That is not to say, however, that they are of no value.

Now the powers of the soul are divisible into the cognitive or intellectual power, and the affective or will power. Mystical knowledge of God is the object of the affective power, while speculative knowledge is the object of the cognitive power. The Divine mystical presence is known, not as an abstract idea or concept resulting from thought, but as an immediate object of love. The experimental knowledge indeed takes place through the agency of the natural powers of the soul, mind and will, but the experimental factor is the gratuitous divine communication which the soul receives. The will is supernaturally united with God in love, and the intellect is made conscious of that union. And so we say, mystical contemplation is the sight or vision of God: not of course sight or vision as obtained by the bodily organ of sense, the eye; nor metaphorical sight, when we mean the intellectual perception of an idea or a truth presented to us from without; not therefore bodily sight, because God is invisible in that sense, being a spirit; not ordinary intellectual perception

because it is not an idea that is seen; but the consciousness of a *living reality*. In mystical or supernatural contemplation it is *God himself* who is the object perceived—not an idea of him, nor any thoughts about him. The soul indeed still exercises its natural powers, or some of them, but it does so under entirely abnormal conditions, created by the character of the object with which it has to deal and that object is God.

When I say above that mystical contemplation is the sight or vision of God, and again that it is God himself who is the object perceived, it must not be understood by this that the essence of God is seen as it is in the beatific vision; God is not seen by the mystic 'face to face'; there is no new revelation of God's being. The mystic sees no *more* than is known by faith, but he sees more *deeply* into the truths of God, and is conscious with certitude of his union with him in love. If we are in the state of grace, we have within us the infused virtue of charity or love; and as our Lord says: 'If anyone love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and *make our abode* with him.' (Jonn xiv, 23). And again: 'He who loves me will win my Father's love, and I too will love him and will *reveal myself to him*'. (ibid. 21). And St Paul tells us: 'Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' (I Cor. iii, 16). God then is within us if we have charity, however weak it may be. But we are not there by conscious of that. In fact, 'Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred'. (Eccles. ix, 1). Only if God should reveal it to us can we know with certitude if we are in God's grace.

However, if we should have arrived at a degree of charity sufficiently great, though we shall not necessarily receive from God the gift of contemplation, that is, an experimental knowledge of his presence, nevertheless he may give us that gift, and if so, we shall be certain of it. In other words, we shall then have with certitude an experimental knowledge of God within us by love, which obviously implies a state of grace. However, this experience of God's presence is only a transient, not a permanent one, and similarly the implied knowledge of our being in a state of grace at that moment is also only a passing knowledge. Nevertheless, that high degree of charity which would seem to be required before God will grant such mystical experience, is indeed of its nature permanent and cannot be lost, except by grave sin. Such

a soul then may certainly be called a contemplative and said to be living a contemplative life.

Now it may be asked in what way can the soul, endowed with this mystical knowledge, be said to *see* God, since the proper functions of the soul are to think, to understand and to will, and these functions presuppose abstract ideas? For it is not an abstract idea that the mystic contemplates. But the same difficulty is involved in trying to understand the beatific vision of God by the saints in heaven. This may be explained as follows: The vision of God in heaven by the saints is not mere vision but union. The blessed see God not from a distance, as objects of the senses are seen, nor by a discursive intellectual process, as intellectual ideas are perceived, but, so to speak, from within. They are not however pantheistically merged in God, but united to him by his supernatural action, so that the consciousness in the soul of the divine presence is akin to its consciousness of itself. As our self-consciousness is intellectual and yet immediate, although only habitual, so also is the beatific vision of God both immediate and intellectual. For this, however, a special divine assistance is required, namely, 'an abiding form', called 'the light of glory'; and in mystical contemplation, too, a similar divine assistance is present by the fact of mystical union.

From what has so far been said, it should be obvious that no one can rightly claim to have a natural aptitude to mystical contemplation. Nevertheless, since, as St Thomas points out, grace does not destroy nature but rather perfects it, it follows that one must have the use of one's mental faculties in order to be able to receive this gift, and so be perfected by supernatural contemplation. Moreover, it must always be borne in mind that though the gift cannot be acquired by the natural exercise of our intellectual powers, yet if it is to be given to us, it is ordinarily speaking necessary for our souls to be prepared for its reception. Yet no amount of preparation can *ensure* God's making himself known to us in this manner. The kind of preparation necessary is chiefly of a negative kind, namely the complete purification of the soul. This demands first of all the *active* mortification of our external senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. Thus we must deny ourselves the sight, as far as we can, of all that is a danger to our morals or virtue, and even sometimes of what is innocent or good, so as to practise self-denial and to check the

possibility of the growth of undue attachment. And so too in the same way with all the other senses.

We have also to mortify, to have proper control over, our internal senses, the imagination and memory, especially. Then there are the passions to control and moderate: love and hatred, joy and sorrow, desire and aversion, hope and despair, courage and fear, and anger. All these have their proper and lawful objects to which they should be directed when necessary or desirable, and also their unlawful objects from which they must be diverted. But even when directed towards their proper and good objects, they may still have to be moderated and even sometimes denied.

Furthermore, besides the senses both external and internal and the various passions, even our spiritual faculties, the intellect and the will, have also to be brought under control. Thus for example we have at times to deny ourselves the gratification of our intellectual curiosity, which though probably in itself harmless and perhaps even good, may nevertheless, owing to circumstances, be not good, or at any rate, not advisable. And as regards our will power, that obviously has always to be properly directed and often denied. So therefore, for active mortification or purification there is a very wide field.

Our necessary purification however will not be complete without another kind, which is called passive purification. This means that, whatever comes to us, or happens to us, without or apart from any deliberate action of our own, must be accepted with full conformity to the evident will of God, from which at least it ultimately comes. It will come to us in all sorts of ways, such as in bodily, mental or spiritual afflictions, in contempt, misunderstandings, injustices, and even, maybe, by persecutions. I said above that the kind of preparation necessary to make oneself more or less ready for the gift of God is chiefly of a negative kind. But there is something also of a positive nature that needs to be attended to, and that is the matter of prayer, vocal and liturgical, but particularly mental prayer. To progress in holiness means also to progress in the practice of prayer, which again usually means to progress chiefly in the practice of mental prayer. We shall never arrive at the highest form of union with God by mystical contemplation, which is a purely gratuitous gift on God's part, until we have arrived at the other higher forms of mental

prayer short of this, and these higher stages of prayer short of the mystical union are quite within the reach of our own powers assisted by God's grace. By the sufficient active and passive purification of our souls and our progress in prayer, we shall render ourselves at least less unworthy of receiving God's greatest favour in this life, if such should be his gracious will.

Now to this high condition of perfection and union with God even all Christians are called, as our Lord himself says: 'Be ye therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.' (Matt. v, 48). But for religious there is an obligation to tend to the perfection of charity by excluding from their lives everything which impedes the movement of the soul towards God. Religious by their state of life are bound under sin to strive after this highest perfection or love of God, at least by putting no obstacle in the way of its attainment, and by striving to prepare themselves for this gift of God—mystical union with him by love. Religious are thus said to be in a state of perfection, that is, in a state of life so constituted by its obligations and regulations as to be specially conducive, as far as can be, to the highest holiness. Now religious life may be divided into three classes, namely, active religious, contemplative religious, and religious whose state of life is a mixture of the contemplative and active lives. But in all three there is the same obligation for the members thereof to strive, as far as may be, after this summit of perfection or holiness. So far as this end in view is concerned, there is no essential difference between any of them. The so-called contemplative religious state endeavours to cut itself off more completely than the other two, from active contact with the world and its activities, so as to be able to devote itself more to actual prayer and recollection, in the hope and belief that thereby it may or will be the better able to prepare for the possible divine gift of supernatural contemplation of the Godhead. It must always be remembered, however, that this supernatural contemplation or contemplative life, as explained above, is possible to *any* state of life, whether religious or otherwise; and it is the more likely to be attained in that state, whatever it may be, to which God calls us. There have always been and still are, I'm sure, true contemplatives in all three sections of religious life, in the ecclesiastical state, in the married state, and indeed in every lawful and good condition of life in this world 'The Spirit breatheth where he will.' (John iii, 8).

PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMILITY, BASIS OF ALL TRUE SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL HEALTH¹

TERENCE O'BRIEN, S.D.B.

CHRISTIANITY has produced without any doubt men and women who have fulfilled in themselves the greatest potentiality of the human personality. In all the centuries of the Christian era there stand out men and women, and no small number of them, whom everyone felt were fully developed and integrated and whom mankind could take as patterns of the mature and developed personality. This has been more so than in any other period of history.

It is very true that it is the triumph of the life of Christ in these men and women that has brought them to holiness, maturity and integration; but in the process their psychological development has taken place. The life of grace does not by-pass nature but adds to it, and lifts it on to another plane. 'Holiness', says St Thérèse of Lisieux, 'does not consist in one exercise or another, but in a disposition of the heart which renders us humble and little in the hands of God, conscious of our weakness and confident even daringly confident in his fatherly goodness.' St Vincent de Paul writing to one of his priests says, 'It is essential for you to empty yourself of yourself, that you may put on Jesus Christ. You know that ordinary causes produce their natural effect: a sheep begets a sheep, a man another man, etc. So too, if he who guides others, trains them, converses with them, is animated only with the human spirit, those who will see, listen to, and strive to imitate him, will become utterly human . . . he will convey to them only the spirit by which he himself is animated.' St Leo says, 'The whole discipline of Christian wisdom consists in true and willing humility which the Lord Jesus chose for himself and taught to others, from his Mother's womb till his death on the cross.'

At the basis of the Christian life therefore is the virtue of humility. It is not the greatest of the virtues but it is the most necessary. It is not simply something which is imposed from without or a series of external acts. It is essentially an interior spiritual transformation which is at the same time an interior psychological transformation. St Bernard defines it as a virtue whereby a man

1 A paper read at a Catholic Psychological Congress in Madrid, September 1957.

through a true knowledge of himself becomes despicable in his own eyes. St Thomas says, 'The virtue which restrains a man's mind from aiming at big things against reason, is the virtue of humility'.

I would like to show as far as is possible within the limits of this paper that the psychological operation which humility is—man's emptying himself of himself—is also the necessary basis of mental health integration and maturity. The better to do this I would like to present two dreams of St John Bosco. The first was in 1876 and was related by him as follows.

'It seems to me as if we were all together going from Lanzo to Turin. We were in some kind of vehicles—I couldn't say whether it was a train or buses—but anyway we were not on foot. At a certain point, I don't remember where, the vehicle stopped. I got out to see what was happening and came face to face with a person I find it hard to describe. He seemed to be tall and short at the same time, both fat and thin, pale and yet ruddy complexioned, walking on the ground and yet in the air. I plucked up courage and asked, "Who are you?" He simply answered, "Come". I wanted to know who he was and what he wanted, but he went on, "Come quickly. Let us turn the vehicles into this field." The funny part about it was that he was speaking quietly and loudly at the same time, and in different voices. The field was a very big one and stretched out level as far as the eye could see. It was not ploughed in furrows, but all flattened like a threshing-floor. I could see the strange person was very determined, so I had the vehicles brought into the field and called to everybody to get out. No sooner were they all down, than the vehicles disappeared.

"Now that we are all out", I said to my strange companion, "perhaps you will tell me why you have made us stop here." "For a very important reason", he replied. "To make you avoid a very big danger." "What danger is that?" I asked. "It is the danger from a very ferocious bull that leaves nobody alive in its path. *Taurus rugiens quaerens quem devoret.*" "Just a moment, my friend", I said. "You are saying about a bull what St Peter said about a lion, *leo rugiens.*" "That doesn't matter", he retorted. "It was a lion there, but it is a bull here. The fact is that you had all better keep a good look-out. Call all your people round you and tell them very seriously to be on the alert. Very alert. As soon as they hear the bellowing of a bull—not an ordinary

bellow, but a tremendous one—they are to throw themselves on the ground and stay that way until the bull has gone past. Woe to those who will not listen to you. If they do not lie face downwards they will be well and truly lost. It says in the Bible that he who lowers himself will be raised up, but he that raises himself up will be brought down. *Qui se humiliat exaltabitur, et qui se exaltat humiliabitur.*”

“Then he went on again, “Quick! Quick! The bull is just going to come; call to them to lie down.” I shouted, but he said, “Louder! Louder!” I shouted so loudly that I believe I even frightened Don Lemoyne who was sleeping in the next room to me. The next moment we heard the bull bellowing. “Look out! Look out!” cried the stranger. “Make them get into two lines close together so that the bull can pass down the middle.” I passed on the order and in the twinkling of an eye they were all on the ground; we could see the bull charging along furiously in the distance. There were some who wanted to see the bull and would not lie down with the others.

“The stranger said to me, “Now you will see what will happen to them because they don’t want to throw themselves down.” I wanted to warn them, to run to them, but he would not let me. “You must obey as well. Throw yourself down.” I was still not on the ground when a terrible bellowing was heard. Everyone was afraid and wondering what was to become of them. “Don’t be afraid”, I shouted. “Get on the ground.” Meantime the stranger was calling out all the time, “*Qui se humiliat exaltabitur, et qui se exaltat humiliabitur . . . qui se humiliat . . . qui se humiliat . . .*”

A thing that struck me as most remarkable was that although I was flat on the ground with my face in the dust, I could still see very well what was going on around me. The bull had seven horns arranged almost in a circle. There were two horns on his nose, two by his eyes, two in the usual place, and one right on top of his head. These horns were very big and strong and he could move them in any direction he liked so that when he was charging he did not have to turn to knock anyone down but just had to go straight on and turn his horns as he went. The horns on his nose were the longest and he was making tremendous sweeps with them.

“The bull was already very near when the stranger called out, “You will see the effect of humility”. To our great astonishment

we suddenly felt ourselves lifted a considerable height into the air, so that the bull could not reach us. Those who were not lying down were not lifted up. In a moment the bull arrived and tore them to pieces. Not one escaped. Meanwhile we were afraid, suspended as we were in the air, and some cried out, "What will happen to us if we fall now?" The bull was furiously trying to reach us, going round in circles and making terrific leaps into the air. He was not able to hurt us. In the end, more ferocious than ever, the bull, *habens iram magnam*, went away making a gesture as though to say, I will go and get some others.

'Suddenly we found ourselves on the ground once more and the stranger shouted. "Let us turn round to the south." Straight away, without knowing how it happened, we saw that the scene in front of us had changed. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed in a big, beautifully decorated church, with great masses of candles on either side of it. As we knelt down to adore the Blessed Sacrament many other angry bulls arrived, all with frightful horns and blood-curdling appearance. However, as we were in front of the Blessed Sacrament they could do us no harm, and we started to pray. After a while we saw that the bulls were no longer there, and turning back towards the altar we found that the lights and the Blessed Sacrament were gone and the church had disappeared.'

The second dream was in 1871 and is recounted by Dom Bosco as follows:

'A few days ago when I was away from home I had a very frightening dream. I was getting ready for bed thinking about the man I told you about not so long ago, the one who took me round the dormitories with a lamp and showed me the guilt-stained consciences of some of the boys, and wondering whether he was a man like us or a spirit in human shape. Before I could decide I had fallen asleep.

'Almost immediately I found myself at the oratory. To my surprise however I saw that the oratory was no longer where it is now. It was at the opening of a large, long valley stretching between mountains, which were more like rambling hills than peaks. I was with a lot of boys but not talking with them; we were all in deep thought. Suddenly the sky became brilliant with a light so dazzling that it blinded us all for a moment and made us keep our eyes down, not daring to look up till gradually the

brilliance faded, leaving us in a darkness so impenetrable, that the boys could only with the greatest difficulty see each other, even though they stood very close together.

‘The sudden change from such brilliance to so deep a darkness made us very much afraid. I was wondering how on earth we could escape from this darkness, when I saw a pale green light appear at one corner of the valley. Extending itself stripwise it remained suspended over it, and by forming an arc rested on the two peaks. This light lit up the darkness somewhat, radiating streams of coloured light much like the rainbow after a shower or heavy storm. While we stood there enjoying such a pleasing sight, the coming of a second phenomenon made the first disappear. There, suspended between earth and sky, was a great ball or globe of light sending out rays of such splendour and intensity, that no one could look directly at it without being in danger of falling senseless to the ground. The ball came down nearer and nearer to us, lighting up everything more brilliantly than ten natural suns at their zenith. As it came ever closer, boys here and there touched by its rays fell flat on the ground as if they had been struck by lightning.

‘Looking about, I began to get very frightened indeed, and didn’t know quite what to do. However after a little while, I pulled myself together and forced myself to watch the globe of light with all the attention I could, till it stopped in its descent about four hundred yards above us. Murmuring to myself that I must get a good look at so extraordinary an object, I examined it carefully all over, and despite its distance from us I could make out some letters carved on the great dome: *He who can do all things*. All around, raised in tier upon tier, was an immense crowd of people, men and women of all ages, all glorious and exultant; dressed in robes of many colours and indescribable beauty, they smilingly appeared to invite us in a very gentle and friendly manner, to join them in their glory and triumph.

‘From the centre of this heavily globe came a rain of dazzling, almost stabbing, rays of light, so brilliant, that striking the eyes of the boys it dazed them and left them staggering, till no longer able to stay on their feet, they were forced to the earth. Unable to stand such brilliance, I cried out, “O God, please, I beg of you, either take this beauty away or let me die: I cannot resist beauty so impelling”. My strength began to fail me after this, and falling

to the ground I shouted to the boys, "Let us ask God to have pity on us".

'After a few moments I roused myself, got to my feet, and began to move round about the valley to see what had happened to our boys. To my great surprise and wonder, I noticed them all stretched out on the ground, quite still and in an attitude of prayer. I wanted to make sure however, and I nudged one or two of them with my foot. "Come along, what are you doing? Are you dead or alive?" I asked. They each replied, "I am begging God's mercy". And this was the reply I had from all of them lying on the ground.

'Further down the valley, however, I came with sorrow upon many of them stubbornly standing upright on their feet, with their heads high and turned towards the globe of light, as if defying the majesty of God. Their faces had become as black as coal. I approached them and called them by name, but they showed no sign of life. They were rigid and stiff as though frozen, having been struck by the rays and shafts of light, as the result of their obstinacy in not being ready to bow down and beg the mercy of God with their companions. I was very distressed to discover that these unfortunate ones were not few.

'Just then, from the other end of the valley, a hideous deformed monster appeared. Never had I seen any creature so mis-shapen, so ugly, as with huge loping strides it came towards us. I made all the boys get to their feet, and when they saw the horrid beast they were shaken with great fear. I looked round anxiously to see if there was any of the staff about whom I could get to help the boys climb the mountainside and defend themselves from the fangs of this savage beast when it would try to attack them; but there was nobody.

'It came nearer and nearer, and was only a little way from us when the great shining globe, which till now had been immovable above us, moved quickly to meet the oncoming monster so that it came between us and it, so as to prevent the beast doing us any harm. It was almost touching the ground. At that moment a voice like a peal of thunder reverberated through the valley with the words, "*Nulla est conventio Christi cum Belial*. There can be no agreement between Christ and Belial; between the sons of light and the sons of darkness . . . between the good, and the wicked whom scripture calls the sons of Belial."

'I woke at these words, numb with cold and shaking from the fear I had experienced. Although it was only midnight I could not get to sleep again, nor could I get myself warm, no matter what I did. And if I felt great consolation from the fact that I saw most of our boys ask God's mercy in all humility, and saw them correspond with his divine grace, I was very sad at having seen the by no means small number of those who, because of their stubbornness and hardness of heart, resisted all grace, were struck by the divine power and deprived of life.'

Within the limits of this paper it is only possible to open up avenues of thought without being able to go along them; but from the consideration of the dreams there is no doubt that in them we are dealing with the reality of life. In the one case it is a journey, in the other a large, long valley—the whole setting has the vastness of the span of life with its past, present, and future. Brilliant light and darkness, half light, indeterminateness of place, wonder, a guide who is everything at once—how much these provide the atmosphere of life. In the two scenes the human beings are face to face with destruction. It is a destruction that comes from the supernatural powers of evil, but it is also without any doubt the destruction which comes from the depths of their own *psyche*. For while the bull itself represents the devil, the seven horns represent the seven deadly sins, and these are *inside* man in germ in the depths of his *psyche*, each containing great dynamic force which can be unleashed.

This is the same destruction which faces every man in life; destruction, which not only can come to him from the powers of evil and from the depths of his own being, but also from the dazzling light that comes to illumine and save him. Destruction comes hurtling along with a terrible roar. St John Bosco looks for means of escape for his boys up the side of the hill—but there is no escape. The forces of destruction must be faced. They are not to be met, however, by violent opposition, but by getting down on the ground. This is outwardly an exterior action, but is in reality the accomplishing of an interior transformation. It is not a running away from reality, but a facing up to it. Although the human being is prostrate on the ground, he is not like the ostrich with his head buried in the sand. St John Bosco remarks that although prostrate on the ground with his eyes in the dust, he could see very well all that was going on around. The human being

on the ground is facing up to *the* reality, his own powerlessness, and his need of help to accomplish that which he cannot achieve by himself. As long as he remains on his feet he is in danger, great danger. St John Bosco is warned that the danger is very great, and that the important thing is to be very much on the look-out. The danger is, that the human being wants to remain on his feet at all costs, to be his own centre and god, gradually lifting himself up more and more.

The primordial temptation of both angels and men is the desire to raise themselves above their state—to want to be as God. This sets going the basic conflict between the two dynamic forces in man. If the force of nature is not going to succeed, it is prepared to destroy. Hence the force of self-destruction which is so often evident in the neurotic and psychotic, and at the least, the reluctance to be cured. A man must therefore empty himself out or he will work consciously or unconsciously for his own glory. The story of mankind shows what follies this leads him to; follies which may not only lead him to destruction but can drag with him countless others (cf. the tyrants and dictators).

Men can avoid this by dedicating themselves to a cause which is outside themselves. But it must be really outside and distinct from themselves, and not simply a golden statue of themselves which has been set up to be worshipped and worked for. In this dedication to a cause a man can 'get down on the ground' and find salvation on the natural level. So can the true artist, craftsman, musician, scientist, poet, save himself; he can humble himself before that which he finds greater than himself, and this is his salvation on the psychological level.

This is a free act which he alone can perform. Man is free, like the boys in the dream, to stand stubbornly gazing at the light or remain in the pathway of the raging bull. It is a free act to get down on the ground, but man has also to set himself free. He is hedged in and besieged in so many ways but he must work towards freedom or suffocate. The worst enemy of freedom, says St Thomas, is ignorance, and the greatest ignorance of all for any man is ignorance of himself. This lack of self-knowledge makes him also ignorant of many other things, and most of all of the danger in which he stands. It is easy to see how humility, by enabling a man to see himself and accept himself as he really is, makes possible his becoming free.

A detailed examination, which is not possible here, could show how humility is a necessary condition of all the psychological mechanisms of both the normal and the neurotic. By means of it a man can accept his shadow instead of repressing it. The whole mechanism of repression can become one of control instead. It opens up the way to throw off the tyranny of the *super-ego*. The humble man is no longer driven by fear to conform to the opinions and standards of his fellow men. When faced with his own errors and sins he can accept his own responsibility, and not be put into a panic by the human conscience established within him in the years of his childhood.

The humble man does not need a person to hide behind: he has nothing to hide from men, being concerned only with God, or his substitute (in the case of humility on the natural level). How valuable this is for a harmonious and integrated personality, preventing the living of a separate life in the secret kingdom of the imagination. How many there are who have presented to the world a pleasing exterior, but who in their thoughts have gratified themselves in a way they could never admit to others, and could never accept themselves. How many cedars of Lebanon have fallen, through the undermining of their lives in this way.

Humility flowers into patience—the sustaining with equanimity and a peaceful heart of the storms, upsets, and trials of human life. Where there are humility and patience, there is no frustration, and where there is no frustration a neurotic state will not easily arise.

The archetypes and the *id* likewise cannot daunt the humble man. They may seek to overthrow him in a furious rush, but he is already on the ground. They may seek to blind him with light, but his eyes are already elsewhere, and although they are in the dust his heart is lifted up to the mountains whence comes his help. Always there rings in his ears the warning words, 'He who lifts himself up will be thrown down, and he who throws himself down will be lifted up'.

It is rightly insisted upon that all analysts should themselves undergo analysis before practising as such. One great necessity for this is in the transference situation which arises in the process of analysis. If the analyst is not aware of his own conflicts, the result may well be that which ensues when the blind leads the blind. The clash or otherwise which ensues between the two

personalities underneath is largely eliminated, or at any rate kept in the right proportions, in a humble analyst, because he has, or is trying, to empty himself of that self or force which comes into collision with the self of his patient ('self' is not here used in the Jungian sense).

With regard to the psychology of Adler it is easy to see how humility provides a solution for the superiority complex. Superficially it might be thought that it provides little help for the inferiority complex which Adler maintains is usually hidden in all problem children, no matter what type of problem they present on the surface. Humility also might be thought to be something which is hardly possible for children. We would venture to suggest that it is possible and also supremely necessary. Adler says that the child who grows up interested only in himself and not in others, cannot be expected to change his character overnight with the maturing of the physical sex instinct; and hence will be unprepared for love and marriage.

How many such there are today! They still get married, with results that are well known to all here present. What advantages in the education of the child over and above the solution to these problems could there not flow from grounding him in humility. The formation of a tyrannical *super-ego* could be prevented. The child finding its true centre and source of security in God would have the law of God operative in its mind and heart, and not that of human authority. It would also make it possible for him to weather the storms he inevitably encounters among his companions, and have a defence where the ordinary child finds himself defenceless—the fear of being laughed and jeered at, and of being drawn into dangers, because afraid of what the others will think or say.

But the supreme achievement of humility is that it makes love possible. Without it, one never knows whether what is thought to be love is only self-love. The *anima*, the *animus*, are always round the corner, hidden away, working unseen. So much that was thought to be for the glory of God and the good of mankind, turns out to be only for the doer's own glory and his lust for power.

What a marvellous picture St Francis of Sales gives us of the spiritual and psychological effects of humility in his exhortation to St Jane Francis de Chantal: 'I desire that you should be

extremely humble and small in your own eyes, gentle, gracious, and guileless as a dove. That you should cherish your own insignificance and try to increase it, using every possible opportunity of doing so with good will. Be forbearing and long-suffering with your neighbour in all tenderness of heart. Never brood over the mishaps that befall you; don't look at them, look at God, taking all things without exception as from his hand, agreeing to everything quite simply. Whatever happens, do not lose your inward peace, even when everything capsizes; for what are all the things of this life, in comparison with peace of heart. Confide all things entirely to God and find your own security and rest in his fatherly protection. God accepts your nakedness and simplicity; so remain and be at peace in a spirit of humble trust.'

May we not say in conclusion, that whenever anything is out of order, it is because we have got off the ground where we belong, and lifted ourselves up in exaltation? And because we have no means of keeping ourselves up indefinitely, we come crashing down—not to the ground where we belong, but to the depths of the pit we have opened up for ourselves, where the snakes abound, and the bull waits to devour us. Little wonder that Jesus asks us to learn explicitly only one thing from him—to be meek and humble of heart—'Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart', and he adds a promise, 'You will find rest to your souls' . . . the rest, integration, peace, which all men are seeking for, and which so few find.



GAMALIEL

(Questions should be addressed to Gamaliel, c/o the Editor, 'The Life of the Spirit', Hawkesyard Priory, Rugeley, Staffs.)

Q. Are the angels, strictly speaking, members of the mystical body of Christ?

SCHOOLTEACHER

A. Yes. St Thomas Aquinas touches on this point when he considers the headship of Christ, and asks himself whether Christ as man is head of the angels (*Summa Theologica*, IIIa, q.8, a.4).

He must be, he says, because where there is one body, there can only be one head. And we call a multitude of beings one body,

in the figurative sense, when they are all geared to one purpose, each in their several functions. And it is obvious that both men and angels are geared to one purpose, which is 'the glory of enjoying God'. So the mystical body of the Church does not only consist of men, but also of angels; and of the whole of this mystical body Christ as man is the head, because he is the nearest to God, and angels as well as men receive all divine graces through the channel of Christ's humanity.

St Thomas quotes St Paul in his support: God exerted his mighty power 'in Christ, raising him from the dead, and seating him at his right hand in the heavenly places, above every principality and authority and power and dominion, and over every name that is named, not only in this age but in the age to come; and he subjected all things under his feet, and gave him as supreme head to the Church, which is his body' (Ephes. i, 20-23).

It might be said with some justice that St Paul seems here almost to be contrasting the Church, the body of which Christ is the head, with the angelic powers of which Christ is the sovereign lord and conqueror. But St Paul's purpose in this epistle, and even more in Colossians, was to insist on the superiority of Christ over *all* creation, spiritual as well as material, and to fight what seems to have been a very strong temptation to some of his converts. This was the lure of a sort of spiritualism which would prefer angels to Christ, and put him rather low down in the heavenly hierarchy. St Paul was not therefore concerned with the position of good spirits in the City of God, which is the Church, which is the mystical body of Christ, but with the relationship of all spirits, good or bad, to Christ. And this relationship is for all of them, good or bad, one of subjection, as ministering servants if they are good spirits, or as conquered enemies if they are bad.

Once this is established, we can see that the good angels do have their place within the City of God, which is the Church, which is the body of Christ. Although they do not belong to it precisely as redeemed by Christ, as having 'washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb', they do belong to it, I think we must say, as being confirmed in their original innocence through Christ, and receiving all grace through him. Perhaps we can see how this is so if we remember the very ancient tradition in the Church about the test the angels underwent at the beginning of creation, the test which Lucifer failed in his pride, and which the good angels

passed in their humility. The test cannot have been simply that they should adore their Creator, because this, so to say, would come naturally to them. The suggestion of this ancient tradition is that they were required by God to bow down before man. If the good angels submitted, it is only right that it should have been by the grace that the Word incarnate would merit in his humanity.

Q. I understand children are generally taught in Catholic schools, that out of reverence for the body of Christ they should try to swallow the host when they go to holy communion without chewing or biting it. This worries me; it seems to be carrying realism rather far.

RECENT CONVERT

A. I certainly agree that this custom does seem to imply the drawing of a mistaken inference from the truth of the real presence. I would prefer to say that it is misinterpreting realism rather than carrying realism too far.

Though the custom is widespread it is not universal, nor necessarily very ancient. I have discussed the matter with some of my colleagues, and one of them mentioned a great-aunt of his, who said that when she was at school the children used to be caned if they were observed to swallow the host after communion *without* first chewing it! This is going to the other extreme, no doubt, but it shows a sounder theological attitude, less governed by the imagination.

Our Lord has really given us his real flesh to eat and his real blood to drink; but he has given them to us, not in their natural form, but in the form of a sacrament, that is of a sacred sign or symbol, in the form precisely of bread and wine, which are the basic elements of a meal. And so while Christ is really present in the sacrament, and the consecrated host really *is* the body of Christ, he is not *localized* in the sacrament; that is to say he is not present in it in the ordinary way in which a body is present in a place, in the way for example in which he was present in the upper room at the last supper. Nor, clearly, is the host the body of Christ in its natural guise and form. So then it is absurd to suppose that if we chew the host, we are somehow hurting the body of Christ, or doing him irreverent violence more than if we just swallow it. The body of Christ is given us in the sacramental form of bread precisely to be our food, to be our means of

communing with our Lord at a sacred meal. So the most reverent way possible of treating this sacrament at communion is to treat it as food. You show more respect for food if you chew it first than if you swallow it like a pill. In John vi, 55 our Lord says, 'He that eats my flesh . . . has life everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day'. The Greek really uses a much stronger word than 'eats'; something more like 'munches'. The Jews were terribly shocked at what our Lord was saying on this occasion, and asked 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' But Catholics should not be shocked at the idea of munching the body of Christ. It is a proper, normal part of the sacramental gesture of communion.

The editor wishes to apologize to readers for the extreme lateness of this issue. The printers have made valiant efforts to catch up on the delay caused by the printing dispute, and but for further delays for which the editor, not the printer, is responsible, this number would have appeared a week to ten days earlier.

Readers are advised that the October issue will also appear a little later than usual.

REVIEWS

LOOK BACK IN LOVE. By Beatrice Hawker. (Longmans; 15s.)

LATE DAWN. By Elizabeth Vandon. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

'It is those Methodists, ministers and laity alike, with the "love of God shed abroad in their hearts", whom I remember with love. I regard it as Methodism's tragedy that she ever became a separate denomination. The love of the true Methodist has nothing to do with sects, it is a spirit needed by all Christians.'

Look back in Love is not a conversion story. Written by a woman who was reconciled to the Church as an adult, it is a tribute and an act of homage paid to the Methodist men and women of rural Somerset where she was born and grew up and where she lives today. This is a beautifully written book, a story told with serenity and love about serenity and love, in which all that is good in Methodism shines through very brightly. Mrs Hawker has wisely chosen to make up her book of family portraits, for it is in the interplay of family life, where a careful love and a considerate kindness is the currency, that Methodism is found at its best: 'I have seen with my own eyes that these Christians do indeed love one another'.

In these Methodist families it was plain that Christ was a member and that 'the chapel was an extension of family life'. Contrary to what is most commonly supposed this was precisely not a 'Sunday religion' but a day by day striving for an apostolic simplicity of life and a singleness of vision and love. Certainly the author would not claim that this pattern is found only in Methodism, and yet here there is an emphasis which appears special in a church whose grasp of the body of traditional Christian doctrine is selective. This was the church of the dispossessed in eighteenth and nineteenth century England, where a man who (Mrs Hawker is writing of her father) 'because of a weak heart and the depression never had a regular job, and who, in spite of these things, had built himself a position of respect and trust in his chapel', found himself accepted as an equal in the possession of Christ's redeeming love. Here was abiding security of tenure in the only kingdom which really mattered.

A stranger might feel stifled by so much 'blessed assurance', and yet a way of life which is determined in every detail by the exigencies of grace will always, and wherever it is found, exert a most powerful attraction on those who are searching and able to see. The full depths of the significance of that grace may have been sadly under-estimated by these Methodists, and the Catholic should find it more difficult to

excuse himself on that score; but that the vitality of Christ is here in his members is not to be denied.

'If my parents had not been so devotedly true to the light they had . . . , I would never have come to hold the faith I hold now. If I looked back with any regret I would be untrue to my convictions; but it would be worse treachery to look back without love.'

'I am an artist', begins Miss Vandon. The interplay of *her* family life had involved no kind of security, moral, emotional or intellectual. She only reluctantly admits to herself that she is searching and only after many hard knocks grows able to see. What Miss Vandon discovers in the west of Ireland is, as she tells it, very like what Mrs Hawker remembers of the Somerset of forty years ago, 'the natural unaffected performance' of the acts of religion, above all, the presence of a 'real thing' often glimpsed, avoided, unconsciously longed for, itself pursuing. The account of her search for reality, in spite of a rather too exclamatory style, makes fascinating reading, for it tells graphically of a post-Christian's bewilderment and irritation in the face of the linguistic stocks and stones put up for her veneration by educators and parents whose Christianity was nominal or non-existent. Miss Vandon's struggle with the 'real thing' (for the child, 'the puzzling character called Jesus Christ . . . I could not make out who, or what, he was supposed to be . . . Moses and all his bunch bored me stiff, this Jesus Christ . . . aroused unaccountable feelings of affection in me') involved her in mental breakdown, morphia addiction, the 'good time'. And then she who felt herself 'cut off from reality' and could not bear what passed for reality in her life, through the transparent sincerity and *joy* of an Irish priest and his people 'saw' the truth of what he had been saying to her 'about God, Christ, heaven, hell and eternity—in one tremendous flash'. The love of the Christians had triumphed again.

GUY BRAITHWAITE, O.P.

NINE SERMONS OF ST AUGUSTINE ON THE PSALMS: translated and introduced by Edmund Hill, O.P. (Longmans, 18s.; pocket edition, 9s. 6d.)

Now that the revival in patristic studies is filtering down from the scholars to the general reader, supporting and enlivening the return to the scriptures and the liturgy, it was a good idea to translate some of the sermons in which St Augustine expounded the scriptures in a liturgical setting for the general listener of his day. Fr Hill in his excellent Introduction makes plain the circumstances of the time—there are in fact after this few allusions which are not easily seen as having a parallel today—and explains well the main difficulty of these sermons,

which is the way in which scripture itself is regarded and used. Even after explanation it remains perhaps easier to disregard the scriptural starting point, and enjoy St Augustine's shrewd, pithy, and humane comments on human behaviour and Christian doctrine for themselves alone. Of this there is enough to make the book useful and enjoyable. Whether St Augustine's Latin is quite so gay and colloquial as the English which Fr Hill uses to capture the modern reader is another question. He is for the most part successful, but on occasion should be more discreet; 'huckster' is surely not quite correct for the Latin *negotiator*, and the suggestions of 'heavenly huckster' are more suitable to Hermes than to Christ; the Word condescended to humanity, not to vulgarity.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD. By Jean Daniélou. A translation of *Le Signe du Temple*, by Walter Roberts. (Mowbray; 5s.)

This very moving little book does not merely contain exegesis, nor just patristic or sacramental theology, but makes use of all three to meditate with insight on the more and more marvellous modes of God's dwelling with men. The sign of the temple, then, is afforded by the cosmos, the temple of Jerusalem, the manhood of Jesus in both his physical and his mystical body, the soul of the believer: all is for man and his salvation, for him to be taken up in the train of the ascending Christ to the heavenly temple. As the author promised, 'the scriptures have yielded up some of their deepest mysteries'.

The translation is not very well done.

JORDAN VINK, O.P.

YOUR OTHER SELF. By Canon Jean Vieuxjean. (Newman Press; \$3.)

Canon Jean Vieuxjean is a professor at Louvain who is well known for a number of works on education and the direction of young people. These are published under the pen-name, and the pun must have been irresistible, of 'Jean le Presbytre'. The present work deals with the second great commandment. It is written with great insight and should prove most useful to those who make retreats and to those who give them. It is an excellent antidote to complacency. It will serve very well as an examination of conscience, both collective and individual. On page 41 the distinction between indifference, attachment and detachment is particularly noteworthy. In the same chapter over-possessive parents receive well-merited criticism. Chapter 20, 'Called to heroism', and Chapter 22, 'Be courteous', deserve special attention. The long quotations from Marcus Aurelius on page 96 will be of interest to many. The translation is done by Mr Richard E. Cross and

is, on the whole, excellent. One suspects, however, that in one place 'injurie' has become 'injured', while in one or two passages one feels that the translator has been rather baffled by a particularly thorny mixture of metaphysics and introspection such as only the French tongue can adequately carry.

RICHARD BLUNDELL, S.J.

THE FACE OF LOVE. By Gilbert Shaw. (Mowbrays; 21s.)

This is a beautiful book. It is a series of prayers in verse-form based on the stations of the cross. As it comprises nearly two hundred and fifty pages, it will be seen that the treatment of each station is lengthy. It is a pleasant change from the rather crude formulae in which this devotion is usually presented to us. Although it is written by a non-Catholic, there is hardly anything in it to which a Catholic could object. All that we have noticed in the course of a careful reading is a couple of occasions on which the word 'Church' is used in a sense which we could not accept, e.g. on page 48, 'his Church divided . . .'; and one or two other minor phrases which could be misunderstood, but which are also patient of an orthodox interpretation. Many of the thoughts and phrases are taken from the scriptures, and in the introduction and notes Catholic spiritual writers are often referred to.

There is far too much on each station for it to be used in its entirety at any one time. One short section from each would make a very beautiful way of the cross. The author has some other suggestions for using the book, thus: 'The prayers are broken up into short sections, each one more or less complete in itself. . . . That should enable the user to choose freely and to rest on those portions which at the time may seem applicable to his devotion. . . . Each line as far as possible, or section, is intended to convey a complete thought so that it can be held, pondered, or prayed over before proceeding further. Those that begin at the margin carry the basic thought; those set in are for the most part enrichment and elaboration of the former; indeed in many cases the longer lines could be read down first and then the subsidiary thoughts of the secondary lines gathered up into the main prayer' (pp. 11, 12).

Those of us who are called upon to preach the stations from time to time will find some useful ideas in this book; used for private prayer and meditation it should help many to enter more fully and profitably into the sufferings and death of our Saviour.

FR SEBASTIAN, O.F.M.CAP.

THE MEANING OF LOVE. An Essay towards a Metaphysics of Intersubjectivity. By Robert O. Johann, S.J. (Geoffrey Chapman; 16s.)

A great deal of the history of philosophy could be written around theories on goodness and love. Plato's entire dialectic hinges on the

idea of the good. Aristotle identifies the good with finality, the first of the four genera of causes, and much of his politico-ethical doctrine derives from his vision of the common good as something to be shared and striven for. These are capital tenets that passed through the neo-Platonic and Judaeo-Arabic traditions into the strongly christianized currents of scholastic thought. The scholastics unhesitatingly identified the good with God, and the problem of love became the mystery of supernatural charity with its many repercussions within the natural order. The problem as they saw it included the following questions. How are we to differentiate between love of concupiscence or desire, on the one hand, whereby something is loved in view of what can be derived from it; and love of benevolence or friendship, on the other hand, whereby a friend is loved in himself and for his own worth? Since friendship involves a mutual give and take, a certain communion and communication of goods among friends, and since the virtue of divine charity is a form of friendship, what sort of give and take can be found between God and his creatures? How is divine love reflected in human friendship? According as the accent fell on one term or another, the schoolmen's replies varied on minor details.

The book under review deals with essentially the same problem, but the approach is new. Anyone familiar with the latest developments in the history of scholastic thought will understand why. Faced with the phenomenal growth of existentialism, many authors deemed that traditional Thomism was too much of an impersonal analysis of abstractions and needed to be existentialized. The discovery that authentic Thomism was no undiluted Aristotelianism as had been thought, but possessed a great deal of Platonic and Augustinian doctrine, gave the clue as to how to re-existentialize Thomism. In its new form, metaphysics ceases to be a science of essences and abstract categories. It becomes instead a science of the existent by an existent, precisely in so far as the latter participates in the value of metaphysical being intuited not abstracted. Metaphysics thus acquires a personalist character, in the Augustinian tradition. In such a context the problem of love is formulated in terms of *eros* and *agape*, of physical love and ecstatic love. The emphasis falls on life not on knowledge. The new approach seeks to avoid treating the lover and the beloved as an 'I-It' duality: as two objects to be looked at from afar and analysed accordingly. Instead, one seeks a philosophy of intersubjectivity: a description of an 'I-Thou' relationship, wherein each person is treated as an irreducible value in himself, and each is loved for his own intrinsic worth. The main difficulty then is in finding a common metaphysical basis for reciprocal love of that kind. Fr Johann finds a basis in the doctrine of participation. These are his main conclusions.

Love of others is the prolongation of love of self. To love another as a friend is not to neglect oneself, but to recognize one's own and the other's value. An entirely disinterested love therefore is impossible. Indeed, it is precisely that that makes for the dignity of friendship. Friends love one another because of what they possess in common. The element of communion is not just an abstract human nature but God as the unique and supreme Good in which all creatures actively participate by their very existence. The love of God then is not the effacement of self. Indeed, only by loving God can man love himself and his friend with a true love of *agape*. To love God the more is to love one's friend the better.

Some reviewers have dealt severely with this book. Admittedly, one could find fault with the excessive bibliography and quotations. There are only seventy-one pages out of one hundred and thirty-three given to the main text. Also the author uses an unorthodox method of giving references to St Thomas. But as a key to an understanding of the Thomistic doctrine on love, we deem it an excellent book. It is closely and clearly reasoned. But it is of use to the specialist only, not to the simple soul striving to love God above all things and his neighbour as himself. The present reviewer's criticism is not so much against the book itself as against the tradition for which it stands in its failure to face up to modern problems. The philosophic question today is not what the meaning of love is, but whether love exists at all. The reader of J.-P. Sartre's celebrated exposition on intersubjectivity will acknowledge that such is the case. The basic relationship among men, he concludes, is hate, and all other attitudes are but variations of that; thus the modern philosopher must see his friend, not in the light of *a priori* theories on love, but as a sexuated 'other' manifesting himself through the mediation of signs and gesture, situated in the same complex world of utensils as himself. Any metaphysic of love which fails to take such a description into account is unequipped to answer the challenge it implies, and is therefore simply building castles in the air.

NICHOLAS FOLAN, O.P.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By Andrés Fernández, S.J., translated by Paul Barrett, O.F.M.CAP. (The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland; \$12.50.)

A life-long student of the gospels may often seek a life of Christ which effectively embodies the findings of years of profound study and reflection, or, if better endowed, he may himself aim at writing such a life. He would then need to have read and weighed every word of the gospels, he would need to be very conversant with their very

particular literary *genre*, he would need to have understood something of how they came to be in the living teaching of the Church which stemmed from Christ and which is their ever-living context. Further, he would need to be versed in all the new testament background, both historical and topographical, and to be a master in 'palestinology' generally. And then he would need to be a theologian who has pondered long on the Word made flesh, as on all theology generally. Thus theology teaches us that each and all the sacraments were intended by Christ—and so that fact is to be added to his life. And so with much else.

All this and more calls for vast stores of knowledge, and an immense capacity for handling that knowledge with true mastery.

Yet even then we have not said all. For our would-be author of a life of Christ must have ability to produce and present a living, vivid portrait of our Saviour, which grows upon us as we turn page after page. And such a presentation makes us go back to the gospel narratives and earliest traditions with renewed zeal and reawakened interest.

If this last is, as we suggest, a main *desideratum* in a life of Christ, then we must say that the volume before us is, in that respect, unconvincing. We have some eight hundred beautifully printed pages of a long drawn out story—made long not by the gospel texts, or paraphrases, but by innumerable notes and reflections through the whole course of the book. Thus, for example, two whole pages go to an exegetical discussion of how to translate *biazetai* (pp. 180-182). We are given the impression that our author has lectured on the gospels for some years, and that now he has presented us with a version of his notes on each and every part of the gospel story. There is a massive total of erudition. Certainly our author knows his Palestine, and has given us of his knowledge. The fortunate few who have been in Palestine will be delighted with this 'refresher course', yet we may sometimes wonder what a chaplet of Arabic place-names may convey to most readers who, alas, are not likely to explore the Holy Land . . . except very imperfectly on a map.

There are copious references to the opinions of many scholars, in the style of: 'Zahn, Lagrange, Prat, Plummer choose the first, while Joüon, Dalman, Fillion the second.' (p. 156, note 13); and animadversions against rationalist critics, Protestants, and *Formgeschichte* (without any hint of progress since Bultmann, and of the possibilities of a certain 'tradition criticism' for Catholic scholars working in full conformity with *Divino Afflante*).

We would have preferred a firmer and simpler presentation of the author's own viewpoint, and footnotes would surely be place enough

for the innumerable aberrations of unbelievers as of separated brethren. As it is, we cannot get a clear picture of our Lord who is the subject of this book. The figure of Christ is blurred by a multiplication of details. Each of these has indeed a part to play, but somehow they are not woven into their appropriate place and so completely subordinated to the person of our Saviour.

In a word, we can say that this book can be valuable for its information content. Many a priest will find sermon matter therein, many a student ideas and references for essays. As a life of Christ, for the reasons already given, it will hardly satisfy the general reader. The more scholarly may also be put off by the same reasons. Texts of the Fathers are often appositely cited; but why give St John Chrysostom in *Latin* (pp. 220 and 271)? Misprints are: 'Van der Vlit', which should be 'Van der Vliet' (p. 293, n. 5); for *lagathenon*, read *galathenon* (p. 211); for Gisera, read Cisera (p. 442); an accent, not a breathing, is wanted on *xúton* (p. 161). Something of the author's mind appears in that (a) Boismard's seven-day symbolism in John i is rejected outright (p. 206, n. 85), (b) Benoit's treatment of the meetings of the Sanhedrin as a *dédoublement littéraire* (p. 700, n. 65) is dismissed as unscientific. Finally, why are the maps prefixed by a depressingly dark picture of Jericho?

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Alan Richardson. (S.C.M. Press; 30s.)

'In this book . . . the hypothesis is defended that Jesus himself is the author of the brilliant re-interpretation of the old testament scheme of salvation (old testament theology) which is found in the new testament, and that the events of the life, signs, passion and resurrection of Jesus, as attested by the apostolic witness, can account for the *data* of the new testament better than any other hypothesis current today. . . . The principle of interpretation here employed is that of historic Christian faith, and the thesis is defended that it enables us to present a more coherently and rationally satisfying history than do the liberal-humanist or existentialist principles of interpretation which have latterly been used in the construction of other theologies of the new testament' (pp. 12, 13). This, as Dr Richardson explains, is what is meant by 'new testament theology' in the title of this book. It will be apparent from this that he works from the standpoint of the 'orthodox' school in contemporary English new testament study: the basic *reliability* of the apostolic preaching as a witness to what Jesus said and did, and at the same time the need to *interpret* this in its developed form in the new testament, in order to distinguish between the inspired message of the

apostolic Church itself, and that of its founder, which it preserves, adapts, and expands.

It would not, I think, be doing violence to the author's treatment to divide his material under the three traditional heads of theology, christology, and ecclesiology. Of his sixteen chapters, the first five would then fall under theology: 'Faith and Hearing', 'Knowledge and Revelation', 'The Power of God unto Salvation', 'The Kingdom of God' and 'The Holy Spirit'. Here he shows how the relationship which man bears to God in nature, and the relationship which the chosen people bear to him in the old testament covenant are respectively transformed and sublimated in Christianity. The next five chapters constitute the christological section. The author examines in all its aspects the theological significance of Christ as Son of Man ('The Reinterpreted Messiahship'), and as Son of God, Lord, Wisdom and Word of God, and 'New Torah' ('The Christology of the Apostolic Church'). The next two chapters are entitled respectively 'The Life of Christ', and 'The Resurrection, Ascension and Victory of Christ', and this section closes with an examination of the effects of Christ's 'victory', reconciliation, redemption, propitiation, etc., under the general heading of 'atonement'. Ecclesiology is treated of in the final six chapters. Dr Richardson first considers the nature of the Church as projection and continuation of Christ's personality, then the ministry and work of the Church as projection and continuation of Christ's ministry and work, and finally the sacraments of baptism and eucharist respectively as incorporating the Church's members into Christ, and as rendering Christ present to those members.

The author draws almost exclusively on the more 'orthodox' trends in contemporary English new testament study, and displays a masterly grasp of the literature representative of these trends. The work of Dodd, Lightfoot, Jeremias, Cullmann and Davies seems especially to have influenced his thought, and many of the leading ideas of these scholars are lucidly and arrestingly reproduced in this book. He is particularly to be congratulated on the superb applications he makes of Jeremias's conception of 'eschatology in process of realization' between the first and second comings of Christ, and also of the idea of 'corporate personality'; Christ is 'the new Israel of God', and the Church is 'the corporate Son of Man' (cf. especially p. 136 f, p. 150 f). Dr Richardson pays special attention to the theme of fulfilment and to old testament parallels and references in the new. Here again his treatment is high successful. 'Jesus is baptized in the Jordan as Israel had been in the Red Sea (cf. i, Cor. x, 2); he sojourns in the wilderness forty days, being tempted, as Israel was tempted (or tempted God) forty years long; on a mountain he calls a new Israel and appoints the

twelve (Mark iii, 13-19) and gives a new law (Matt. v, 1; Luke vi, 12-49); on a mountain he stands transfigured with Moses and Elijah, who each had of old time encountered God on Horeb; he gives the signs of the bread from heaven, as Moses and Elisha had once done. Finally he goes up to take his kingdom, passing as the old Joshua (Gk. Jesus) had done through Jericho; and before he departs he ratifies a new covenant in his blood and institutes a new passover which his disciples shall keep until his return in glory' (p. 22).

This author's attitude to miracles and the supernatural is important. It could, I think, be summarized somewhat as follows: (a) 'I accept in principle the supernatural reality of the new testament miracles' (cf. especially p. 171). (b) 'Often I cannot determine from the text of the new testament the *historical nature* of the miraculous events referred to' (cf. p. 119, 336, etc.). (c) 'Therefore I by-pass historical and archeological questions (p. 336) and concentrate on the *theological significance* of these events' (pp. 95-102, etc.). It is on this point, I feel, that a fairly radical criticism of this book must be made. It lacks any real sense of *Heilsgeschichte*, that is, of salvific history *as meaningful*. The significance of the supernatural events recorded in the new testament grows initially out of the events themselves as historical, and secondarily out of the inspired description of those events in the pages of the new testament. The supernatural fact of the life, death and resurrection of Christ is kerygmatic in itself. As history it contains its own eternal significance. The words of the new testament draw that significance to a sharp point. The writing of the new testament is itself a *heilsgeschichtliche* event. These considerations ought to make a profound difference to our conception of new testament theology. Above all they should prevent us from 'by-passing the historical question' and so arbitrarily cleaving between theological significance and historical fact. They should prevent us from presenting new testament theology as a series of 'key ideas', abstract and over-departmentalized, and arranged in an order imposed by the theologian's own logic. They should make us see new testament theology as God's truth uttered in history and projected into written words, growing out of and converging upon the creative moments in the *Heilsgeschichte* of Christ. Here those creative moments are, so to say, 'reduced to the ranks' and assigned a logical place (in chapters 8 and 9 to be exact) in the long sequence of 'key-ideas' of which this book is composed. It seems to me a pity. Had Dr Richardson been more patient and more discriminating in his attitude to the schools which he labels respectively 'existentialist', 'liberal' and 'medieval', his own thought might have been greatly deepened and enriched. He might have gained from the school of Bultmann in particular, for all its terrible wrongness in other directions, that vital awareness of the

new testament as *Heilsgeschichte* which this book so signally lacks. As it is he dismisses these trends wholesale in a series of sweeping generalizations. '... Modern biblical scholarship enables us to sweep aside the tortuous misunderstandings of medieval unbiblical speculation, and also those of more recent "liberal" theories...' (p. 231)—and so on. Moreover this tendency to over-generalize occasionally lands him in positions which seem to me indefensible. 'Merit is a notion which the new testament entirely discards' (p. 239). (Cf. Matt. xix, 27: '... we have left all and followed thee; *what then shall we have?*'). He also dismisses certain Catholic doctrines very cavalierly, as when, in a single disastrous sentence on p. 172 he replies to an objection of Emil Brunner against the virgin birth, and in the same breath ascribes a Manichaean origin to the doctrines of our Lady's immaculate conception and perpetual virginity. He adds that these doctrines are '... quite alien to the healthy biblical attitude towards sex!' Incidentally, it is to be observed that the important work done by Catholic new testament scholars on the continent is utterly ignored.

For all this it must be recognized in justice that Dr Richardson has managed to convey an immense amount of information in a form that is logical and lucid. He is a past and proven master of the 'theological word-book' technique, which he uses here with effect. Within its limits and in spite of its defects therefore, his book will be exceedingly valuable to new testament scholars.

J. BOURKE, O.P.

THE SILENCE OF ST THOMAS. By Josef Pieper. (Faber and Faber; 12s. 6d.)

Professor Pieper's essays on St Thomas are by now well enough known in England, thanks to Messrs Faber and Faber, to make special recommendation unnecessary. Professor Pieper has style, he has insight, he is sensitive to the needs of the time—a combination of qualities which, it must regretfully be acknowledged, is rare among expositors of St Thomas. No reader of the three essays translated in this volume, all of them concerned with the 'negative' element in St Thomas's philosophy, can fail to be impressed by Professor Pieper's openness to the humane in philosophy; and this again is specially to be welcomed in England today.

This is not to say that the present reviewer has not very definite reserves to make both with regard to the style and with regard to the positive content of this collection of essays. The use of texts from St Thomas is sometimes precisely essayistic; I am not at all sure, for instance, quite how the beautiful text from the commentary on the

De Causis, quoted on p. 61, is supposed to support the thesis that 'things are knowable because they are created'.

Professor Pieper maintains that the knowability and the unknowability of things are involved in a kind of circumincession, as it were: an insight which we are grateful to find expressed so lucidly. But it is not easy to see how this unknowability of beings can be so neatly pinned down and explained in terms of the unknowability of the relationship of imitation between creature and Creator. I do not deny that this is true *systematically*; within the 'system' of St Thomas's thought, that is to say, a statement of this sort can and should be made. But the unknowability, the mystery, of beings is what we encounter first in our experience of beings; it is precisely this unknowability which invites the mind to make the ultimate affirmation *that God is*. It seems paradoxical, or at any rate 'dialectical', to bring in the Creator in order to explain or to locate the unknowability of the creature; is the Creator known or unknown, philosophically, except through the knownness and unknownness of the beings with which and with whom we enter into existential intercourse? The mysterious intelligibility of Being is experientially and philosophically prior to the mysterious intelligibility of God. Perhaps Professor Pieper might gain from a re-reading of Heidegger's studies of the Presocratics here.

The translation seems very adequately done, as far as can be judged without comparison with the original. It should however be noted that the reference to a commentary on 'St John's epistle' on p. 38 is erroneous; St Thomas did not write such a commentary, and the text in question is to be found in the commentary on St John's *gospel*.

CORNELIUS ERNST, O.P.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE AND MYTH. By L. Malevez, S.J. (S.C.M. Press; 25s.)

The S.C.M. Press and Dr Olive Wyon have put us still further in their debt by publishing this excellent translation of Fr Malevez's extremely sympathetic and lucid exposition of the theology of 'demythologization' developed by the Protestant scholar Rudolf Bultmann. The present publication has the further advantage of providing a translation (by Bernard Noble) of a later study by Fr Malevez of Bultmann and Barth, which appeared originally in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*.

Fr Malevez's great merit as an expounder of Bultmann is his calm detachment. It is not easy to be detached about Bultmann; and in fact his views have stirred up the most passionate controversy among German Protestant theologians. At the same time there is no denying his learning and insight, and his existential impetus; and there is no

doubt that his theses strike at the heart of faith in Christ. It would not be a great exaggeration to say that all recent work on the historicity of the Christian message, the *kerygma*, has taken the form of an *Auseinandersetzung* with Bultmann.

Fr Malevez's last chapter, 'The Verdict of Tradition', where he attempts to 'place' the teaching he has so clearly analysed in earlier chapters, is rather disappointing. Surely the Catholic theologian can make a more positive response to the challenge of Bultmann than Fr Malevez's somewhat pale apologetics. It would be possible, for instance, to revive the scholastic theology of the *res gesta* as the revelation-reality proclaimed in the revelation-word: a *res gesta* which is much fuller than a mere *res facta* or *acta*. And Fr Malevez has shown elsewhere that he is capable of more creative theology than this.

Finally I feel bound to protest against the extraordinary mistranslation of Heidegger on p. 31; Heidegger may be enigmatic, but he does not talk *nonsense*. Why 'his own self-disclosure'? The phenomenological method consists in allowing what shows itself to be seen in its own terms, according to the very manner in which it shows itself. The essay referred to on p. 29 is by Hugo and not by Karl Rahner. It would be preferable to speak of 'the *Dasein*' rather than just of '*Dasein*': *das Dasein ist ein Seiendes*.

CORNELIUS ERNST, O.P.

RUYSBROEK'S DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRITUAL BASIS FOR THE SOUL'S ASCENT: II. By Albin Ampe, S.J.

Albin Ampe, S.J., divides the second part of his monumental study of Ruysbroek's teaching, *De Geestelijke Grondslagen van den Zieleepgang naar de leer van Ruusbroec* into two volumes: and in the first of these, *Schepping en Christologie* ('Creation and Christology', *Studien en Tekstuitgaven van Ons Geestelijk Erf*, Tielt, 1951) he is concerned with a further aspect of the *Bildtheologie* in the works, with an exposition of what Ruysbroek believed and taught about the nature of man as he is made in the likeness of his divine exemplar. Although Ampe carefully abstains from treating of the attacks upon the soundness of this doctrine which have been made, it is none the less plain that as he writes he constantly has such critics as Gerson in mind; and this study benefits greatly from its author's care to show, as Ruysbroek himself protested, that his views were wholly incompatible with, utterly averse from, pantheism. To the many who today still remember the old charges and look askance at him, one would commend this very careful and detailed critique. The lucid explanations which we are given of such topics as the union between the creature and its Creator ('a unity of relation, not a unity of identity'), the implications of difference in the doctrine of 'likeness', the Word as image of God, are

both a very sure guide to our right understanding, and a very strong inducement to us to turn back from them to the works themselves. 'Thou hast made us for thyself': Ruysbroek knew this at a depth, and expounded it with a sublimity unparalleled in the annals of the Church.

ERIC COLLEDGE

THE LIFE OF ST JOHN OF THE CROSS. By Crisógono De Jesús. (Longmans: 45s.; pocket edition: 18s.)

This new life of St John of the Cross appeared in Spanish in 1955. As the translator shows in her introductory note, it is the work of a scholar who devoted his life to the study of St John and St Teresa and whose documentation was necessarily more complete than that of the French Carmelite, Fr Bruno, whose life of the saint appeared in an English translation in 1932, which benefited by the expert editorship of the late Fr Benedict Zimmermann. As befits such a work as this, there are a very large number of footnotes and references; these are given together at the end of the book, the notes being suitably edited for English readers by the translator, and the references given without the comments which accompanied them in the Spanish text; in this way the difficulties due to considerations of space have been overcome without any great loss to the reader.

The life of the saint is traced in detail, one might almost be tempted to say in too great detail, were it not that it is precisely by the accumulation of so many small facts that the picture of the saint stands out in end so clearly. The portrait which emerges will certainly cause astonishment to many who only think of St John as a gloomy sort of person, addicted to a life of exaggerated penance. He was, in fact, anything but gloomy, and if he did lead a life of complete detachment, and of unremitting and sometimes almost frightening austerity, yet in many respects he remained very humane, and it is the balance between the two, so perfectly achieved, which made him, and still makes him, so attractive. His great love of nature, his loving care of the sick, his lasting affection for his family and for his especial friends were, whilst remaining very human, shot through with the love of God, whose whole-hearted and loving servant he was. One slight criticism of the author's work might perhaps be made. It seems to us that in the matter of the saint's persecution by the unreformed Carmelites, a more balanced view is that given by Fr Zimmermann in a postscript to the life by Fr Bruno. The Carmelite friars were all caught up in a welter of overlapping and often contradictory authorities, not to speak of the constant interference, sought or unsought, of the king; so that a good unreformed friar, and there must have been many, might well have thought, not without some show of justifica-

tion, that St John really was a disobedient friar and a potential destroyer of the order. This certainly appears from much of what is set down in the present life, but not so clearly nor in so balanced a way as by Fr Zimmermann.

The book is beautifully produced with a number of helpful illustrations, a map, and indices of persons and places. There is a smaller or pocket edition with the same pagination, containing only the text, a map and index; it is considerably cheaper, but inevitably the print is on the small side. Miss Pond's translation reads easily and pleasantly.

ANTONINUS FINILI, O.P.

WITH GOD AND TWO DUCATS. By Katherine Burton. (Chicago, The Carmelite Press, pp. xii and 214, with five portraits, \$3.50 or 25s.)

Under this surprising title comes the first published history of the Corpus Christi Carmelites—surprising, that is, for any unaware that the great St Theresa is reported to have said, 'With God and two ducats I can do anything'. This is a jubilee book, the fiftieth year after the Congregation's foundation in 1908 coinciding, happily enough, with its formal and final approbation in Rome in 1958. The present archbishop of Port-of-Spain, the Most Rev. Count Finbar Ryan, O.P., who has witnessed the growth of the congregation almost from the beginning, pays glowing tribute in the preface to the Carmelite sisters themselves and of course to their venerable Foundress, Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Ellerker.

The distinguished women who started the movement were, all of them, converts to the faith. Dr Brindle, bishop of Nottingham, was soon on the spot and asked Miss Ellerker to open a school in Leicester. Coming at once under the paternal and powerful influence of Vincent McNabb, prior of Leicester, all the members became Dominican lay tertiaries. This was around 1909. In 1929, all who had remained in the community, along with the very large number of others who had joined them, became affiliated with Carmel! As readers of the book will see, much of great interest had happened during those twenty years. It was not the first time in history that individual Dominicans had a large share, one way or another, in the foundation of other orders, other patterns of religious life.

The work of this new Congregation of active Carmelites has remained what it really was from the very beginning. The idea of active Carmelites is not in itself an innovation, as may be learnt from this book: Joachina, canonized the other day by Pope John XXIII, had founded such a Congregation in Spain only a hundred years earlier. These Englishwomen, and the many other women who have joined them, seemed and seem quite ready to tackle St Theresa's

'anything'—from cooking and catering to children's catechism classes and the instruction of converts of university standing. They have opened retreat houses for men and for women, for boys as well as for girls. They have tended the sick and opened industrial schools, as such institutions are still called in some of the lands to which their order has spread. For spread it did, to the West Indies first, then to North America, and now to Mexico and other places in the three countries referred to in the sub-title of the book.

In the beginning these valiant women adopted no special dress, continuing to wear what they pleased. One of them favoured a shade of brown that was really purple. On a certain occasion (not mentioned in the book), as this individual was seen walking up the drive at Hawkesyard to visit their counsellor and friend, Vincent, a wag in our community exclaimed, 'Oh, here comes Mother Inviolable!' Actually, at first, members were not called Mother, but the situation was developing in every direction, and soon a special attire was agreed upon, simple and practical, while for the divine office, to which they had always clung, they wore the long white scapular to show that they were daughters of St Dominic. It was Bede Jarrett, among others, who encouraged them in the matter of the public recitation of the office. 'The more active and missionary the order', he said, 'the greater is the need of the divine office, not the less need.'

The little group had long been asking Rome if they might become a pontifical institute. Providentially, as it would seem, the request was never granted, though this by itself had little to do with their passing from the status of Dominican lay tertiaries to that of full-fledged Carmelite religious. Such a transfer of allegiance could not, to be sure, have taken place without some pain, the pangs of a re-birth, but an account written only thirty years after the event cannot be expected to tell the reader everything. In chapter six there is a good account of Trinidad as it was in 1919: the establishment there, in Port-of-Spain, was to become the mother house of the new Carmelite congregation, the centre of future development.

A few misprints I noticed, but none of them serious. *Couteurier* on p. 50 for *Couturier*, *Ball* for *Bull* on p. 68, *prior general* on p. 130 for *master general*, and the same *Fr Theodore Bull* was never *prior* of Holy Cross, Leicester (p. 198), though he may have been *subprior*. Mrs Katherine Burton, a friend of the order, has indeed done her work well.

RAYMUND DEVAS, O.P.